

Theoretical and practical aspects of the debate on marriage
among the priestless Old Believers from the end of the
seventeenth century to the mid-nineteenth century

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Abstract

The priestless Old believers did not have the sacrament of marriage because they did not have a priesthood. Unions between men and women were therefore regarded as sinful, and this difficult situation caused much debate.

In this dissertation, the history of the debate itself is studied both for its intrinsic interest and as a means to explore the development of the ideas, beliefs and behaviour of priestless Old Believers.

Chapter 1 is devoted to the resolutions of the Novgorod council of 1694, including the prohibition of marriage, and to Feodosy Vasil'ev (1661-1711), who was an active participant in the council and the founder of the Theodosian branch of the Old Believers.

Chapter 2 deals with the first debate on the nature of marriage between Andrey Denisov (1674-1730) of the Vyg community and the already mentioned Feodosy Vasil'ev.

Chapter 3 examines the doctrines of Ivan Alekseev (1709-1776) who polemicized against the priestly Old Believers, but also tried to find some arguments in favour of marriage for the priestless.

Chapter 4 is an attempt to show the practical implications of the prohibition of marriage, and of the meaning of the doctrine within the Old Believer communities. Other Old Believers who took part in the debate are briefly mentioned.

Chapter 5 is dedicated to Pavel Onufrevich Lyubopytny (1772-1848) and his radical revision of Old Believer conceptions of religion, the church, ritual, history and marriage.

Chapter 6 expounds the ideas and writings of Sergey Semenovich Gnusin (?-1839), the most prominent ideologist of Theodosian conservatism.

Chapter 7 shows how the debates among the priestless Old Believers were misunderstood by the Government, causing unjustified alarm which resulted in the setting up in 1820 of a Secret Committee on the Old Believers and in a partial return to policies of intolerance and persecution.

The dissertation is based on both published and unpublished sources, and on archival materials.

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Introduction

The Old Believers (starovery) are those Christians of the Russian Orthodox Church who rejected the liturgical innovations sanctioned by the Moscow council of 1666/67 (1). They are divided in two main branches: the priestly Old Believers (popovtsy) and the priestless Old Believers (bezpopovtsy). The priestly Old Believers accept priests consecrated by the dominant church, provided they renounce the new rituals and perform the liturgy according to the old ones (2); since they have priests, they retain all the sacraments, marriage among them. The priestless Old Believers regard as uncanonical ordinations of priests performed according to the new rituals, believe that the Apostolic Succession (3) has come to an end together with the condemnation of the old liturgies in 1666/67, and consider the dominant church antichristian and its sacraments devoid of grace. This division marks two antithetical positions.

The priestly Old Believers manifest a readiness for compromise with the outside world, and a concern to find a modus vivendi with it as long as the purity of faith and the correct rituals

1 On the schism of the Old Believers by far the best work remains P.Pascal, Avvakum et les débuts du raskol, Mouton, Paris, 1969. A work has recently appeared in English, N. Lupinin, Religious Revolt in the XVIIth Century: the Schism of the Russian Church, Kingston Press, Princeton, 1984, but its standards are so low, that it has seemed inappropriate to include it in the bibliography.

2 The best history of the popovtsy remains P. Mel'nikov, Istoricheskiye ocherki popovshchiny, Moscow, 1864, also reprinted in vols. 13-14 of PSS, St.Petersburg, 1898.

3 See A.A.T.Ehrhardt, The Apostolic Succession; and F.Dvornik, The idea of apostolicity in Byzantium.

are observed within their churches and communities. The position of the priestless Old Believers, as will emerge from this study, is more complex. In principle, they refuse to compromise, but in practice they, too, accept demands of this world. Their attitude to the question of marriage is in this respect revealing. Marriage was not possible because there were no priests to celebrate the sacrament: as stated by the Novgorod council of 1694, there remained only two sacraments to the faithful, baptism and penance, which in case of need could be performed without the assistance of a priest. In practice, the priestless Old Believers continued to have a family life of sorts, and both marriage and its prohibition were hotly debated amongst them. The filippovtsy, who broke away from the other priestless Old Believers in 1742, and the beguny or stranniki, who in their turn broke away from the filippovtsy in the 1780s, were the most consistent in their rejection of marriage, which they did not even want to discuss (4).

The debate involved the Theodosians and the Pomoryan priestless Old Believers and its history is the subject of the present research. The question of marriage has been chosen as a subject of inquiry because it is a direct approach to the exploration of the history of the priestless Old Believers in a period in which they were busy creating their own independent culture and providing their own answers to the questions posed by the world.

4 See R.O.Crummey, The Old Believers and the world of Antichrist, pp. 179-182, 202-203.

While there now is a considerable body of research on the Old Believers in general (5), the question of marriage has so far received little attention. In 1869 a professor at the St. Petersburg Religious Academy, Ivan Nil'sky, wrote a two-volume monograph on the subject (6). Until then the priestless Old Believers had been the object of malicious slander. They were accused of leading a life of corruption and fornication, and of using the absence of marriage as an excuse to justify their sinful life and attract likeminded lechers into their flock (7). Drawing on a variety of Old Believer texts, Nil'sky showed that the prohibition of marriage among the priestless Old Believers was the result of deep speculation, the object of extended debate and the cause of numerous hardships to the faithful. His serious approach to the problem was welcomed by some reviewers and condemned by others, who accused him of excessive and ungrounded

5 See A.S.Beliageff, 'Articles and Books relating to the Old Orthodox in Languages other than Russian', CMRS, XXI (1), January-March 1980; and P.Pera, 'Alcune note sulla storiografia dello scisma dei "Vecchi Credenti" russi'.

6 I.Nil'sky, Semeynaya zhizn' v russkom raskole. Istoricheskiy ocherk raskol'nicheskogo ucheniya o brake, 2 vols. St. Petersburg, 1869.

7 Curiously enough, A.P.Shchapov, in his pre-populist phase, was one of the propagators of this view, in Russkiy raskol staroobryadstva, Kazan', 1859. His essay was criticized in a review by I.Nekrasov, published in N.Tikhonravov ed., Letopisi russkoy literatury i drevnostey, vol.2, Moscow 1859, which was printed in the printing press of the Old Believer Grachev. The Old Believer Mikhail Ivanovich Stukachev protested against the vilification of Old Believer morals in a letter, 'Otpoved Feodoseevtsa', printed in n.206 of Moskovskie vedomosti in 1866. It was a standard accusation to be found in most propaganda books against the Old Believers. The corruption of the bezpopovtsy became also the subject of yellow press style vilifications; see e.g., M.Yastrebov, 'Krovavyi grekh. Rasskaz' in Moskovskiy listok, 1890, where the Old Believer elder is called Bludaev. It was customary for converts to the Synodal Church to denounce the immoral customs of their previous coreligionists: see e.g., A.Zhezlov, 'Rasskaz byvshey raskol'nitsy E.V.Iguminshchevoy', BS,

belief in the chaste way of life of the Old Believer elders (8). Nil'sky's book still represents a good starting point for anybody interested in the question of marriage among the priestless Old Believers: he quotes extensively from his sources and outlines a chronological development of the debate. But there are weaknesses: Nil'sky is excessively preoccupied with an assessment of the ethical and sexual mores of the priestless Old Believers, and in doing so he relies on sources of dubious value (9); besides, since the publication of his book, a number of new studies have been published and texts discovered which throw new light on the subject (10). The preoccupation with Old Believer sexual morals can no longer concern anybody as an issue of practical and social relevance. Yet the debate on the question of marriage lends itself to a different set of questions for the historian of ideas and of popular culture, and opens up new insights on government policy towards the Old Believers.

1893,I,7. Missionaries sent among the Old Believers also used these arguments: see e.g., Mikhail Smirnov, 'Beseda o Feodoseevskom bezbrachii', Pribavlenie k N.21 Ryazanskikh eparkhial'nikh vedomostey, 1890,n.21, and Missionerskii sbornik, 1891,n.1; Ioann Uspensky, 'Beseda pravoslavnogo svyashchennika-missionera s glagolemymi staroobryadtsami', Vladimirskie eparkhial'nye vedomosti, 1891,N.18; Ioann Mukshin, 'Beseda protiv Feodoseevtev o brake', Kostromskie eparkhial'nye vedomosti. The popovtsy would also use the same arguments against the bezpopovtsy: see e.g., Shalaev, 'Ni svyashchenstva, ni tainstv', Tserkov', 1912,n.44.

8 See N. Ivanovsky, 'Brakobortsy i brachniki v staroobryadcheskom raskole' for a favourable appraisal; and N. Barsov 'Spornye voprosy iz pervonachalnoy istorii bezpopovshchiny'.

9 This had been already observed by N. Ivanovsky, op.cit. p.343.

10 Of these, suffice it to mention here P.S. Smirnov, 'Nachalo bezpopovshchinskoy polemiki po voprosu o brake', which is based on two fundamental texts that had not been known to Nil'sky.

One widely-held assumption is that after the death of the Denisov brothers (Andrey died in 1730 and Semen in 1741), the Old Believers did not produce anything of cultural relevance. Thus, for instance, Sergey Zenkovsky defined the Denisovs' time as the "golden period of Old Believer thought", and wrote that after them "the movement produced no other thinkers capable of applying modern methods and techniques in the further development of traditionalist ideology" (11). A study of the debate on the question of marriage, with its abundance of ideas and arguments employed can but dispel the impression that the Old Believers' culture faded after a brilliant beginning with the Denisov brothers: quite the contrary.

Another widely-held assumption is that there was a steady move of culture away from religion towards secularization (12). While this may be the case for ideas that had access to printing presses, it need not be the case for writings which did not appear in print. Printing was a privilege of the institutions, at least until the ukaz of 1783 allowing for the establishment of free printing presses (13), and much more was read and circulated than was actually printed. Not all readers, as Gary Marker has pointed out, were interested in what the literati had to offer, and meshchan'e, raznochintsy and kupty would have read more of what was printed, had their interests been taken more into

11 S.A. Zenkovsky, 'The Ideological World of the Denisov brothers', p.65.

12 See G. Marker, Publishing, Printing and the Origins of Intellectual Life in Russia, pp.3-5.

13 PSZ, n.15634 of 15 January 1783.

account (14). In the case of Old Believers of those social categories, this study will show what type of writings they wanted to read and which authors they helped and supported. Pamphleteering, which played such a prominent role in the European political and religious ferment of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, in Russia remained a phenomenon confined to the Old Believers until well into the nineteenth centuries (15). Only now scholars are beginning to realize the scope of the phenomenon, the wealth of manuscripts written and circulated, which the Synod called "vorovskaya, a ne Gosudareva pechat'" (16) and which would be sold at the famous trade-fairs such as the one of St. Macarius near Nizhniy-Novgorod (17). To this day, while archeographical expeditions continue to reap regular harvests inside the Soviet Union, it is still impossible to draw up a comprehensive catalogue of Old Believer writings (18).

This research has one further limitation, namely the considerable gap between my original research plan and the materials which it has actually been possible to see. I was not granted access to the manuscript collection of the Institute of Russian Literature

14 G. Marker, op.cit., pp.19,235.

15 Ibid., p. 189.

16 Ukaz of 21 April 1732, ODDS, vol. XII, St. Petersburg, 1902, p.295: "criminal, not sovereign press".

17 G.Marker, op.cit., p.219. As an example of illegal books sold at the fair, see the synodal ukaz of 25 January 1731, ODDS, vol. XI, St. Petersburg, 1903, pp 66-69.

18 The reports on 'arkheograficheskie ekspeditsii' are too numerous to be quoted. They are to be found in most issues of TODRL, in the books published in Novosibirsk under the editorship of N.N.Pokrovsky (on which see N.N.Pokrovsky, Puteshestvie za redkimi knigami, Moscow, 1984) and in other publications, such as I.D.Koval'chenko ed., Russkie pis'mennye i ustnye traditsii i dukhovnaya kul'tura, Moscow, 1982.

(Pushkinskii Dom) in Leningrad, or to the manuscript collection of the Leningrad public library Saltykov-Shchedrin; I am grateful to the personnel of TsGIA and of the manuscript department of BAN in Leningrad, though I have not had the good fortune of spending more than a month among those treasures: the then chief of the Inotdel of MGU took a personal dislike to my pursuits, and the pleadings on my behalf of my Moscow supervisor, the late Professor B.I.Krasnobaev who took much interest in my work and offered me all the support he could, failed to move him. In Moscow access to archives and manuscript repositories turned out to be a tricky business, and rejections sometimes took devious and mocking forms. For instance I was twice refused access to the manuscript department of the Lenin Library, on the grounds that my request did not correspond to my research plan; a third request, by the end of my soujourn, was finally granted, but for a week only... GIM was more generous: I had access for about three months, and made the best use I could of the two weekly days of opening. TsGADA eventually granted access, but inexplicably did not seem inclined to yield all what was expected. Luckily, official reserve was balanced by the generosity of a private scholar, who welcomed me to study whatever interested me in his rich collection, - which was even richer before a substantial part of it was donated to one of the state depositories and there, as far as my work was concerned, buried. I will not name him: as a far greater scholar of the Old Believers wrote of the Russians who had helped him and whom he would have liked to thank: "Hélas! la pire ingratitude de ma part

serait de les nommer" (19). In spite of this gap between what I had hoped to see and what I actually saw, I still found that I had enough materials to build on. A few primary sources have been published: for the earlier period of the debate on marriage, there are the important sources published by P.S.Smirnov in his excellent scholarly studies (20). Although I have not been able to read all of Ivan Alekseev's most important work, O tayne braka, in the original I have been able to rely on the extensive quotations from it made by I.Nil'sky in his book. I have been luckier with Pavel Onufrevich Lyubopytny's writings: I was able to read most of them in the original manuscripts, though for a particular work I would have been most interested to see I had to rely on a far too concise account by N.I.Kostomarov (21). Sergey Semenovich Gnusin's writings are not easily seen: I could examine only two of them in that one precious week at the OR GBL; for the rest I am indebted to the private collector. To conclude on a more optimistic note, the documents of the Secret Committee on the Old Believers were an unexpected result of my work at TsGIA in Leningrad (22). I was not allowed to see anything concerning the years after 1824, but what I saw gave good insight on the government point of view on the debate on marriage among the Old Believers, and its response to it in terms of toleration of their religion.

19 P.Pascal, op.cit., p.XXV.

20 See for instance P.S. Smirnov, op. cit., and by the same author Vnutrennie voprosy v raskole v XVII veke, and Spory i razdeleniya v russkom raskole v pervoy chetverti XVII v.

21 This is Khronologicheskoe yadro starovercheskoy tserkvi, ob yasnayushche otlichnyya eya deyaniya s 1650 po 1814 god, on which see N.I. Kostomarov, Istoriya raskola u raskolnikov.

22 TsGIA, fond.1473, op.1-46, ed.khr.1, Bumagi sekretnago

Reading these Old Believer writings in the original manuscripts in which the books referred to are often quoted, provides a curious example of what Peter Burke has described in terms of distorting sieve (23). In popular culture ideas usually associated with the Enlightenment and with German Pietism were referred to, filtered, absorbed and somewhat distorted by the context and the use made of them.

It seems remarkable that such ideas should have circulated at all among the Old Believers, as another assumption often made about them is that their culture was totally closed to outside influences and contaminations. In fact one contribution of the present research is to raise the question of the influence of both the Enlightenment and Pietism on the Old Believers. Although this problem will come up time and again discussing the various Old Believer thinkers, only in the fifth chapter it has been possible to attempt a more detailed discussion. If the focus of the present research is inevitably narrow, concentrating as it does on the debate on marriage, the advantage is that it has been thus possible to explore more thoroughly the source and circulation of ideas in Russia, and to outline a still unexplored chapter of their history. As it turns out, if manuscripts do not seem to find a reflection in the printed books, the printed books did circulate among the authors of the manuscripts: it is as if the two worlds were separated by a one-way mirror: there was no dialogue, but there was an awareness by one side of the existence

komiteta o raskol'nikakh.

23 P.Burke, Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe, p.60.

of the other. The ideals of these two worlds were not the same; if the Old Believers read secular books, and sometimes made use of ideas which were originally secular, their overriding preoccupation remained religious.

In the last century I.Nil'sky was carried away by the discovery of how rich the debate among the Old Believers was, and claimed that they were so advanced as to have formed a civil conception of the institution of marriage before anybody else in Russia. He was much criticized for this blunder (24). It would be a similar blunder now to see the Old Believers as adherents of the Enlightenment or of Pietism. But it does seem legitimate, after this research, to see the Old Believers as, not divorced from contemporary cultural developments, but rather as taking part, on their own terms, in the history of ideas in Russia. The debate on marriage affords the historian the opportunity to study and observe the peculiar interaction between the culture of the Old Believers and the culture of secular society. As it turned out, both eclectic assimilation and uncompromising refusal proved to be possible responses within the context of Old Believer culture. A system of thought and a culture able to accomodate within its boundaries two different and opposite stances is a system which has reached maturity and a cultural autonomy. With this in mind, and in spite of the fact that the question of marriage continued

24 See, e.g., T.I.Filippov, 'Pis'mo k Ivanu Fedorovichu Nil'skomu', in which Nil'sky is accused of attributing to the Old Believers opinions such as those expressed in George Sand's Lucrezia Floriani. Nil'sky replied in 'Otvét na pis'mo T.I. Filippova'. See also N.I.Ivanovsky, Kriticheskiy razbor ucheniya bezpopovtsev o tserkve i taynstvakh, pp. 315-379, and op.cit., pp.33-44.

to be discussed well into the present century, I have decided to conclude my study with the ideas of the two Old Believers who best represented the two horns of the dilemma that emerged in the course of the debate: Lyubopytny and Gnusin. It seemed to me that subsequent discussions are repetitions and reiterations of their basic arguments (25). The quarrel was not over, but the weapons were not going to be changed.

The SEER system of transliteration has been followed.

Dates are given in the Old Style.

In the footnotes, titles are quoted in abbreviated form. For full titles the reader is referred to the bibliography.

25 For instance the Theodosian Petr Ivanovich Lednev (1821-1895), in religion Pavel Prussky, and his associate Konstantin Efimov Golubov led a lively debate on the question of marriage in their journal Istina (1862-1887) which they printed first in Johannesburg in Prussia (Piszu in Polish), and from 1868 in Pskov inside Russia, after both of them joined the dominant church. See Iwaniec, Z dziejów staroobrzędowców, pp.108-147; N.Stiebnicki, 'S lyud'mi drevlago blagochēstiya'; K.F.Nadezhdin, 'Raskol'nicheskii zhurnal', pp.316-332; Lavrsky, 'Nechto iz... polemiki', pp.437-444; 'Raskol'nicheskaya gazeta', pp.398-402, 'Novye izdaniya', pp.270-298. On the contacts with the populist emigration in London, see N.Subbotin, 'Russkaya staroobryadcheskaya literatura', pp.99-129; and P.Call, Vasily Kelsiev, p.97-101.

Chapter 1

From Avvakum to the Novgorod Council of 1694.

Marriage became an issue of debate during the lifetime of Archpriest Avvakum (1620-1682). From Pustozersk, where he had been imprisoned in 1667 for his refusal to accept the liturgical reforms definitively sanctioned by the Moscow council of 1666/67, Avvakum was trying to fend off the most radical among the Old Believers who expected heroism from all the faithful (1). From the beginning of Christianity there have been many examples of heresies that considered marriage sinful and denied its legitimacy (2). Among the Old Believers too there appeared some who preached against marriage. One such was a Moscow priest, Isidor, who completely rejected the sacrament of marriage: he ordered married couples wanting to embrace the Old Faith to divorce; he forbade marriage to Old Believers even in cases when a priest of pre-Nikonian ordination was available; lastly, he prohibited sexual intercourse even to those Old Believers who had been legitimately married before the schism in the Russian Church (3).

1 For Avvakum's stance against these extremists see P.Pascal, Avvakum et les débuts du raskol, pp.535 and passim.

2 See for instance, K. Mueller, Die Forderung der Ehelosigkeit fuer alle Getauften in der alten Kirche; H.Preisker, Christentum und Ehe in den ersten drei Jahrhunderten; F.Bolgiani Storia del cristianesimo, vol.1, pp.3-162.

3 P.S.Smirnov, Vnutrennie voprosy v raskole v XVII v., p.172. It seems that the more radical and ascetic tendencies later to be found among Old Believers such as Isidor, are to be traced to the influence, starting in the 1630s, of a certain Kapiton, whose followers were called 'Kapitony': cfr. P.Pascal, op.cit., pp.62-63, 341, 528. See also A.P.Shchapov, Russkij raskol staroobryadstva, pp.194, 283. The followers of Kapiton rebelled against the Church prior to the liturgical reform, besides rejecting the Church, they also refused all the Sacraments,

Avvakum was most indignant and reprimanded Isidor. He reminded him of the Apostle Paul's view: "Paul ordered, 'to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband'. But enough digging into this matter: what you are really doing is to teach people how to live as in Sodom" (4). Isidor had argued that marriage must be abolished because Christianity had reached the Last Days, when there could no longer be a church, while Avvakum saw no relevance in Isidor's argument that there would no longer be a church where Old Believers could marry, and argued that in some way or another marriages had to be celebrated. In case of need, he thought, "even an izba can be turned into a church" (5). Avvakum believed that even marriages celebrated in an unsatisfactory way could be put straight and perfected by the addition of prayers recited by an Old Believer priest or elder (6). Avvakum saw no virtue in a chastity observed by command rather than by choice, and he feared that such chastity would be worse than marriage in that it would lead to onanistic practices (7). Isidor's zeal, which in its eschatological pathos reminded Avvakum of the prophet Elijah, was praiseworthy, but to the archpriest it seemed

marriage among them: cfr. V.S.Shul'gin, Dvizheniya oppozitsionnye pp.174-203.

4 Avvakum, Pis'mo (pervoe) popu Isidoru, col. 939. Avvakum's reference is to 1 Corinthians, VII,2.

5 Loc.cit.

6 Avvakum, op.cit., coll. 939-940.

7 Avvakum Pis'mo (vtoroe) popu Isidoru, col.943. In this letter Avvakum pronounces himself in favour of the recognition of marriages celebrated by priests of Nikonian ordination, as long as an ecclesiastical penalty is imposed on the newly-married. This pronouncement of Avvakum, of course, did not affect developments among the priestless Old Believers, who refused priests of Nikonian ordination altogether.

that Isidor's belief that in the Last Days legitimate marriages no longer existed was wrong; Avvakum agreed that in those days the passions of the flesh and the diffusion of sin would be intensified, but he also thought that the marriages of the just would remain, as Noah's family had survived the flood (8). Avvakum's disapproval notwithstanding, Isidor's ideas found a following among some Old Believers, and Avvakum had to intervene personally to defend the marriage of one of his followers.

The persecution of the Old Believers had made it necessary to have clandestine monasteries. One had been instituted in a Moscow house by a certain Mother Melaniya. There Elena Khrushcheva, who before the schism held an important position in the monastery of the Ascension in the Kremlin, was a nun (9). This "Elena-durka (stupid)", as Avvakum called her, conducted a violent campaign against the widow of a boyar, Kseniya Gavrilovna, who was the sister of a very close friend of the well-known boyarina Morozova (10). The reason for the campaign was that Kseniya had married for a second time and had given birth to a child. Elena forced Kseniya to part from her husband, and it seems that in her violence she killed the infant whom she regarded as illegitimate.

8 Avvakum, op.cit., col. 941-942. Isidor was not the only one to preach against marriage: there is evidence of it as early as 1681 and 1683; P.S.Smirnov, op.cit., p.170.

9 Cf. P.Pascal, op.cit., pp. 328,457-458.

10 Avvakum, Poslanie Borisu. Avvakum wrote this letter in 1608. See Pamyatniki, p. LVIII. Ksenya Gavrilovna was the sister of Anisya, a friend of Morozova and a nun in Mother Melaniya's monastery. Pascal, op.cit., p. 537. On Morozova, see A.I. Mazunin, 'Vozmozhnyi avtor Povesti o boyarine Morozovoy'. Also, by the same author: 'Kratkaya redaktsiya Povesti o boyarine Morozovoy' and "Ob odnoy pererabotke Zhitiya boyarini Morozovoy'.

One cannot say for certain where this happened. According to P.O.Lyubopytny (1772-1848), an Old Believer who wrote about these events much later, in 1670 Fedora Morozova consulted Avvakum's fellow-prisoner in Pustozersk, the starets Epifany, and asked him whether he believed that in such troubled times for the Church there could still be legitimate marriages. Epifany is alleged to have replied that the Holy Scriptures proclaimed the continuation of marriage until the end of the world, that to abolish marriage would have been against nature, that he had to admit that even in his old age the fire of carnal passions could still affect him and that it was therefore all the more likely that young and uncultivated minds should succumb to these passions. For these reasons Epifany allegedly concluded that it was "better to marry than to burn" (11). It seems most likely that Epifany conferred with Avvakum on the matter: they had a very close relationship, Epifany being Avvakum's spiritual superior (12). Smirnov doubts the authenticity of Lyubopytny's account. I am inclined to believe Lyubopytny's witness about the year the incident took place, as well as Epifany's basic position, which credibly enough coincides with Avvakum, with whom he agreed on most issues. What may be inaccurate are the language and some of the reasons attributed by Lyubopytny to Epifany, which are all too redolent of Lyubopytny's style- but this need not invalidate the basic

11 I Corinthians, VII, 9. See P.S.Smirnov, op.cit., p.054. On Lyubopytny, see chapter 5.

12 The autobiographies of both Avvakum and Epifany bear witness to their close relationship. This is best seen in the autograph of the autobiographies they wrote at each other's encouragement. See Avakkum, Zhitie, and Epifany, Zhitie.

point, namely, that Epifany defended the institution of marriage. On learning of Elena's attack against Ksenya, Avvakum wrote from Pustozersk where he was imprisoned. He placed on Elena, whom he regarded as guilty of murder, an interdiction of seven years, three years of excommunication and penitential weeping for two years in the courtyard of the monastery; she was also forbidden the Eucharist for two years, and was no longer deemed worthy of handing candles and wafers to the priest. Every day she would have had to prostrate herself one thousand times. Such was Avvakum's indignation that he gave orders that the humiliating sentence be read aloud in public, and instructed his disciple Dosifey to reprimand Elena: she had acted wrongly because: "The Apostle had ordered that young widows should remarry, rather than burn" (13). Irodion, another disciple who tried to defend the censorious nun, was reminded by Avvakum that "Cursed be he who separates husband and wife" (14). Irodion made amends by paying his respects to Kseniya and presenting her with a copy of the Kniga Efrema: a beautiful present, as Ephraim^{the} Syrian (c.306-373) was renowned for his poetical style (15). Avvakum also wrote to Kseniya to console her and encourage her to find the husband from whom she had been forced to separate again and live with him under his blessing (16). If this was Avvakum's position on the

13 Avvakum, Poslanie Borisu, col.858. Avakkum, like Epifany, is referring to I Corinthians, VII,9.

14 Avvakum, op.cit., col. 861.

15 The Kniga Efrema referred to by Avvakum is the Pouchitel'nyya slova sv. Efrema Sirina, Moscow, 1647 (Karataev, n.691). Cf. A.S.Archangel'sky, 'Tvoreniya ottsov tserkvi', pp. 42-53.

16 Avvakum op.cit., col. 860.

question of marriage, one can wonder why the issue continued to be debated by the priestless Old Believers without paying much attention to this incident. The reason probably is that, at the time Avvakum was writing, there still were many priests ordained according to the old rituals, who could and did celebrate marriage ceremonies which were fully Orthodox. It remains a matter of speculation what Avvakum's position would have been, if he had to consider the question of the legitimacy of a marriage celebrated without the assistance of a priest of Orthodox ordination: which is what priestless Old Believers were to debate in years to come.

Novgorod was one of the most important centres of the Old Believers in the North of Russia. The Novgorod community of Old Believers traced its origins to a certain archpriest Varlaam of Pskov, who was the first to preach against the liturgical innovations, for which reason he was sentenced to death sometime during the persecutions of the 1680s; other Novgorod Old Believers of the same period were a certain Il'ya, a priest, a merchant, Ivan Dement'ev, who was archpriest Varlaam's spiritual son, a runaway peasant named Timofey, a certain Tikhon Feodorov, also a peasant, a town-dweller, Ivan Merkur'ev, and a clerk, Gerasim Pavlov (17). This remained a somewhat loose community of Christians united by a general rejection of what they had come to view as the church of Antichrist, until Feodosy Vasil'ev (c. 1665-1711) succeeded in establishing his ascendancy and formulate a set of binding rules and prescriptions. In consideration of

17 P.S.Smirnov, op.cit., pp XVI-XVIII.

the crucial role he played in the definition of the question of marriage a brief sketch of his life will not be out of place. For his biography the historian is indebted to his son Evstraty (1692-1768) who wrote it around 1742 (18). Evstraty writes with pride and delight about the origin of his ancestors in the Urusov boyar family of Moscow (19). His grandfather, Vasily, was a priest in the Church of St. Nicholas in Novgorod, in the Krestetskii Yam, a parish where most Old Believers were concentrated (20). Vasily met the resolutions of the 1666/67 council outwardly with fearful approval, but in secret, so his grandchild tells us, he had sympathy for the rebellious Old Believers whom he protected and helped to hide (21). Around 1665 a son, Feodosy, was born to him (22). After the death of his father, Feodosy married so as to be able to succeed him as priest at the church of St. Nicholas in Novgorod, but at first he only succeeded in being assigned to the church as a deacon, on account of his youth. In the absence of other sources on Feodosy's life, it is difficult to assess the veracity of Evstraty's account and

18 On Evstraty Feodosevich see Pavel Onufrevich Lyubopytny, Istoricheski Slovar', pp. 105-107. For a list of some of his writings see Druzhinin, Pisaniya, pp. 279-280.

19 His great grandfather, Evstraty Urusov, had been taken prisoner during the Times of Troubles when the Poles invaded Russia. After a captivity of 16 years he moved to Novgorod where he entertained good relations with the other boyar families of the Trusov, Tret'yakov and Nashchekin clans; from the latter he took his wife, who gave birth to Vasily. See Evstraty Feodosevich, Zhitie Feodosiya Vasil'eva, p.73.

20 P. Justinov, 'Feodoseevshchina pri zhizni eya osnovatelya', p. 259. On the concentration of Old Believers in the Krestetskii Yam, see ODDS, vol I, (1542-1721), St. Petersburg, 1868, n.260/261 of 8 May/8 August 1724, p.265.

21 Evstraty Feodosevich, op.cit., pp. 73-74.

22 Lyubopytny, in his Slovar', gives 1656 as Feodosy's date of birth, while P.D. Justinov (op.cit., p. 259) argues that Feodosy cannot have been born before 1665.

to what degree what he writes is due to his respect for hagiographic conventions (23). These conventions were not breeched by Evstraty's story of a Feodosy, who initially was an ardent supporter of the Nikonian innovations, and whose heart was eventually touched and enlightened by God acting by means of some pious men who, around 1690, allegedly made Feodosy aware of the sinfulness of the innovations introduced by Nikon (24). Having learnt the truth, Feodosy did not hesitate to abandon the church and tell his parish that salvation could not be achieved by following the new dogmas contained in the new books (25). Evstraty's account fails to explain how it came about that in his own home Feodosy should not have heard of the Old Faith from his own father, who, after all, is reported to have been a sympathiser. Feodosy was rebaptized in the Old Orthodox faith, with the name of Dionisy. Feodosy's wife, son and daughter and two of his brothers also were converted to the old faith, and after the baptism moved to another village, where they lived in pious monastic industriousness observing a rule of silence. After the death of his wife and his daughter "marvellous Feodosy" was freed from the yoke of marriage and could devote himself entirely to the traditions of the Old Church, to the pursuit of a pure life and to the exercise of virtue. He spent a great part of his days reading the Holy Scriptures, trying to understand their hidden depths, and from this reading, as his son tells us, he acquired great virtue, wisdom and extreme erudition and

23 On hagiography see F.Kitch, The Literary style of Epifanii Premudry, and relevant bibliography.

24 P. Justinov, op.cit., p.262.

25 Evstraty Feodoseevich, op.cit., p.74.

knowledge "as an industrious bee gathers honey" (26). Feodosy was also an active missionary of the Old Faith. He preached in Novgorod as well as in many places outside Russia; "with this activity he freed a great number of people from the temptations of Antichrist, turning them towards the religion of true Orthodoxy" (27). In his missionary activity Feodosy preached a rigorous, severe observance of the rules of the Old Faith and he condemned those who tried to find an easy compromise between adherence to the old faith and human needs. One of the first disputes in which Feodosy Vasil'ev became involved shows him in this role of chastizer of compromise. This dispute is of interest also because it helps to clarify the wider context in which the question of married life was viewed. It must be borne in mind that at the time we are dealing with the division between priestly and priestless Old Believers had not yet been rigidly codified.

After the schism and with the onset of severe persecution some Old Believers had fled abroad and established communities outside Russia. One such community was founded over the Russian border with Sweden. It was situated by the river Narva, in a locality called Chernaya Myza. The leading Old Believers there were the ieromonakh Varlaam, a certain Ioann Dement'ev, of

26 Evstraty Feodosevich, op.cit., p.75.

27 Loc.cit. Evstraty writes that Feodosy preached in German and Polish territory, as well as Russian.

the Pskov-Novgorod region, and Ivan of Kolomna (28). Apparently these three Old Believers had in the beginning agreed not to accept and give recognition to fugitive priests of Nikonian ordination, of whom they had no need as Varlaam could perform the necessary sacraments. After the death of Ioann Dement'ev and of Varlaam, Ivan of Kolomna adopted a different policy: he decided to accept fugitive Nikonian priests who wanted to join the Old Believers retaining their sacerdotal rank, and let them celebrate the sacraments for the benefit of the community. But other elders of foreign centres, on learning of this, wrote to Feodosy expressing their disapproval. Alarmed by this news in about 1692 Feodosy Vasil'ev went to Chernaya Myza in order to persuade Ivan of Kolomna to discontinue his acceptance of Nikonian priests and his rapprochement to the Nikonian church (29). As we can see from this episode, the sacraments as such had not been ruled out yet by Old Believers, and what was being objected to was their validity when performed by priests of Nikonian consecration. Evstraty recalls the episode in the following words: "Ivan of Kolomna neglected a temperate life, fell into extreme weakness, as he did not want to proceed by the narrow path, but took a liking to the wide one: he

28 P. Mustinov, op.cit., p.264.

29 Loc.cit.

started to accept from the heretics baptism, communion, ordination, marriages and tonsure, and to have any kind of consecration with them" (30). Evstraty deplored that Ivan of Kolomna found many followers among "literate Christians ... for human nature is easily inclined to the wide path and to corrupted life, even without being guided towards it: all the more so if they guide it in that direction" (31). As for the wide path, in the missive brought by Feodosy Vasil'ev to Novgorod back from Chernaya Myza it was so described: "They drunk intoxicating mulled wine, and they said that it was not a sin for people to marry, and they would share food and drinks with the infidel Nikonians" (32). Feodosy Vasil'ev was accompanied to Chernaya Myza by a group of Novgorod coreligionists, Spiridon Maksimovich, Il'ya Yakovlev, Evsey Grigor'ev, Zakharii Larionov, Mikhail Filimonov and Roman Feodoseev. Together they held public discussions during which, according to Evstraty, fortified by apt quotations from the Holy Scriptures, they defeated the arguments put forward by Ivan of Kolomna, so successfully that "those Christians full of shame no longer dared to show him their faces" (33). Back in Novgorod in 1692 Feodosy Vasil'ev denounced Ivan of Kolomna whom he had failed to win over to his views and to the

30 Evstraty Feodoseevich, op.cit., p.76.

31 Loc.cit.

32 Andrey Ioannovich Zhuravlev, Polnoe Istoricheskoe Izvestie, p.93 - the quotation is from "Kopiya s gramaty, pisannoy Novogorodskimi perekreshchivantsami na skhodbishche byvshem v leto 7200 (1692) Iuliya v I deni", at the pp. 91-98. In this missive it was also deplored that Ivan of Kolomna said that the Greeks could still be considered Orthodox, while it was a commonly held view among the Old Believers that the Greeks had long since lost the true faith.

necessity of abandoning his practices (34).

Aware of the state of confusion and disagreement reigning among the Old Believers, Feodosy Vasil'ev pressed for the convocation of a council of Old Believers in Novgorod during which this and other matters could be settled. What until then had remained the loosely articulated position of a group of Old Believers united by their rejection of Nikon's innovations and the shortcomings of an ever more deficient Old Believer organization, was to become fixed in a clear set of rules. The Novgorod Old Believers gathered twice in Novgorod, in 1692 and again in 1694, and the resolutions of the councils were to lay the foundation of the religious practices of the priestless Old Believers. These councils, resulting as they did in the prohibition of marriage, are crucial events in the history of the debate on marriage among the Old Believers. In order to assess the full implications and impact of the 1694 resolutions, a few words are necessary to explain the belief in the spiritual advent of Antichrist. It was this belief which lent urgency to the prohibition of marriage and therefore bears closer scrutiny before moving on to the rules of the 1694 council.

In Russia the seventeenth century had been a century of widespread apocalyptic expectations (35). The year 1666 was

33 Evstraty, op.cit., pp. 76-77. According to Zhuravlev a group remained faithful to Ivan of Kolomna, and Feodosy brought back to Novgorod a letter from him in which he said that "Your Novgorod rule is damned, in the baptism administered by you it is the Devil who ministers, your teaching is crooked and your traditions of the fathers a lie". See Zhuravlev op.cit., pp. 92-94. See also P.S.Smirnov, op.cit., p. 180.

34 P. Justinov, op.cit., pp. 264-265.

35 On the apocalyptic expectations of the seventeenth century

regarded as particularly ominous because the number 666 figured in the Revelation as the number of the Beast. According to chapter 30 of the Kniga o vere (Book on the faith), a collection printed in Moscow in 1648, the third apostasy from the Christian faith was expected to take place in Moscow in 1666, the first apostasy being that of Rome, which took place a millenium after Christ, i.e., in 1054, the second one being the creation of the Uniate Church at Brest in 1596 (36).

Expectations were ripe for the council of 1666/67 to be interpreted as marking the Third apostasy from the Orthodox faith, which is what the Old Believers did. The third apostasy was supposed to mark the beginning of the Kingdom of Antichrist, shortly after which the second coming of Christ, the end of the world, and the final revelation, or apocalypse, were supposed to take place. As these failed to materialize, discussions on the nature of the Kingdom of Antichrist ensued. The written polemic started in 1670 with an intervention by Deacon Feodor (?-1682) who was at the time a fellow prisoner of Avvakum in Pustozersk (37). Feodor argued that since Moscow, the last repository of the true faith after the Roman apostasy of 1054, had lost its piety, the end of the world was at hand. Thanks to the Nikonians

dating back to the Time of Troubles (1598-1613), see P.Pascal, op.cit., pp. 1-8 passim.

36 P.S.Smirnov, op.cit., pp.CXXXI-CXXXII. The Kniga o vere edinoy, istinnoy, pravoslavnoy, Moscow 1648 (Karataev n. 641) was a compilation of various polemical texts put together in 1644 in Kiev by a certain Abbot Nafanail. Its main target were the Uniates. It enjoyed immense popularity: its 1200 printed copies were nearly all sold in a month. Cfr. E.I.Kaluzhnyatsky "Igumena Nafanaila "Kniga o vere" and D.Tsvetaev Protestanstvo i protestanty v Rossii do epokhi preobrazovaniy, pp.670-3.

37 In 1670 Deacon Feodor wrote a Poslanie vsem vernym

who had betrayed the Orthodox faith, Antichrist would soon gain power even in Moscow, the Third and Last Rome (38). The true faith would be preserved only in the hermitages, because all three Romes had fallen and had become receptacles of impiety (39). Deacon Feodor believed that Antichrist had not yet appeared, and would do so incarnated in a specific human being, who would be a Tsar (40). Another Old Believer, Spiridon Potemkin, argued that because of Satan's dexterity Antichrist would not directly attack the Holy Ghost and the faith but would act by indirect means in order better to mislead the faithful; once the ground was prepared, he would appear in person (41).

A Moscow Old Believer, Avraamy, argued in his Shchit very (Shield of the faith) that Antichrist would come from the North and would be Russian; apostasy and Antichrist would coincide. Since in Russia the apostasy had been Nikon's work the obvious conclusion was that he was indeed Antichrist (42). Avraamy thus agreed with Deacon Feodor, that Antichrist would come as a human being, but

(Druzhinin, n.8) Cf. P.S.Smirnov, op.cit., pp.6, XLVI-VIII. On Deacon Feodor see entry in RBS, 1913, pp. 275-277, and 'Diakon Feodor'. See also P.Pascal, op.cit., pp.331-333; 467-479 on his theological disagreement with Avvakum, and N.V.Ponyrko "D'yakon Fedor-soavtor protopopa Avvakuma".

38 Cf. P.S.Smirnov, op.cit., p.4.

39 Cf. P.S.Smirnov, op.cit., p. 7, LXVIII-LXX. Deacon Feodor argued this in one of his last writings, Poslanie k synu Maksimu (Druzhinin, n.7) of 1676-1679.

40 P.S.Smirnov, op.cit., pp. 8-11. These views of Feodor were shared by his fellow prisoners in Pustozersk Avvakum and Lazar.

41 On Spiridon Potemkin, a member of the same family who had its most famous representative in Grigory Aleksandrovich Potemkin (1739-1791), see P.Pascal, op.cit., pp. 307-310, passim, and P.S. Smirnov, op.cit., pp. 12-13.

42 P.S.Smirnov, op.cit., pp. 16-18;22. On Avraamy, also known as the Holy Fool Afanasy, see P.Pascal, op.cit., pp. 432-433 passim. Avraamy composed his Shchit very in 1669; in 1913 an edition was printed in Moscow by the Old Believers of the Preobrazhenskoe community.

disagreed in that he believed Antichrist already to have been incarnated in Nikon. Other Old Believers speculated that Tsar Aleksey Mikhailovich was the incarnation of Antichrist (43). What all these theories had in common was a belief in the physical incarnation of Antichrist; he was to be a specific individual, whether Patriarch, Tsar or other. The doctrine of a spiritual Antichrist, of Protestant origin, came as a major departure from previous speculation (44). It was this doctrine that was adopted in Novgorod.

The First Council of Novgorod took place on 1 July 1692. At this council the doctrines of Ivan of Kolomna were condemned and it was decided to break off communion with him and with his followers. Against Ivan's thesis that marriage was not a sin, two resolutions were passed in Novgorod against starozheny - i.e., Old Believers who had been married already before joining the Old Believer church - and against novozheny - i.e., Old Believers who had married after joining the Old Believer church. The starozheny were required to continue their cohabitation in chastity while the novozheny were required to separate altogether or else face excommunication (45).

43 P.S.Smirnov, op.cit., p.29.

44 On the doctrine of a spiritual Antichrist in Protestantism, see R.K.Emmerson, Antichrist in the Middle Ages, pp. 206-221, and R.W.Scribner For the sake of simple folk.

45 I.P.Justinov, op.cit., pp. 264-266. P.S.Smirnov, op.cit., pp. LXXXVIII-LXXXIX, n.151, believes the text of the 1692 resolutions to be the one printed in A.I.Zhuravlev, op.cit., pp. 91-97. Justinov dissents partially from Smirnov because he believes that Zhuravlev inadvertently lumps together the 1692 rules with part of the rules of 1694, namely with those prescribing chastity for all Theodosians and he thinks that universal chastity was prescribed for the first time in 1694, when it became necessary to do so after Ivan of Kolomna had

In spite of the failure to persuade Ivan of Kolomna to recant, the Novgorod Old Believers considered themselves the victorious party, speaking with the authority of "the whole Eastern Catholic Apostolic Church" (46). If a second council was convened in Novgorod this was probably because the council of 1692 failed to provide a comprehensive set of rules for all questions with which the Old Believers were concerned. It was indeed such incidents as the one which occurred on the occasion of his disagreement with Ivan of Kolomna that had made Feodosy Vasil'ev aware of the need for comprehensive guidelines and a more solid codification of rules. In the course of his debates with Ivan of Kolomna Feodosy greatly clarified to himself his own position, and his views on the organization of the Old Believer community (47).

criticized the private life of the Novgorod elders. In case this should be obscure, it must be pointed out that the implication of Iustinov's interpretation is that the rules prescribing chastity for all priestless Old Believers had the aim of insuring that chastity was observed inside the sobor, or council of elders, while in Smirnov's interpretation chastity was considered the rule both for priestless Old Believers at large and for the members of the sobor. It is a subtle distinction, but one which made a world of difference in real life. For a discussion of the different obligations of members of the sobor and of the lay communities, see chapter 2.

46 A.I.Zhuravlev, op.cit., p. 91. The signatures of 14 elders of the Novgorod community are appended to the resolutions.

47 P.Iustinov, op.cit., p.467. See also Evstraty Feodoseevich, op.cit., p. 77.

The second council took place in Novgorod in May-June 1694. Its importance cannot be stressed too much in the history of the Old Believers. It was then in fact that the division between priestless and priestly Old Believers was codified. Before that date it had not been as clear as it was to be afterwards that for one branch of the Old Believers "priestlessness" was to be considered the inevitable consequence of the reform sanctioned at the council of 1666/67. For this reason the period before this council can in a way be regarded as the "prehistory", the prelude to the debate on the question of marriage among the priestless Old Believers. Before 1694 the prohibition of marriage was still only in the realm of the possible and even the likely. As the council called together in Novgorod in 1694 by Feodosy Vasil'ev marked such a crucial landmark, it will be necessary to pause on all the articles which were then ratified by the future priestless Old Believers (48). The priestless doctrine of the spiritual advent of Antichrist was proclaimed as a dogma in the very first article: "For our sins we have reached the end of the world, during which Antichrist reigns over the world, but it is spiritually that he reigns, in the visible Church, on the throne of the living God, under the name of another God, Iisus (49) pretending to be God, and with his antichristian army

48 Prigovor ili Ulozhenie Novgorodskago Sobora 1694 goda, (Druzhinin, n. 724. p. 436) in P.S.Smironov, op.cit., pp. 041-045. The articles were ratified on 3 June 1694, and 26 signatures, including Feodosy Vasil'ev's, were appended to it. Hereafter the articles will be referred to in the text by their numbers.

49 The Old Believers spelt the name of Jesus as Isus, while the Nikonians had introduced the spelling Iisus, which they regarded as closer to the Greek original Ιησους. See M.Makary, Istoriya Russkago raskola, St.Petersb rg, 1855, pp. 77-80. The Old Believers argued that the God worshipped by the Nikonians was

destroys the Church of God, exterminates its sacraments, darkens everything which is holy and enforces his innovations". With this article the priestless Old Believers took a different stance from the priestly, who generally believed that Antichrist was not yet reigning, that his reign would be physical, expressed in the rule of a specific man, and would last only for a period of three and a half years. The root of the disagreement between priestly and priestless Old Believers lay in their different theories regarding Antichrist which entailed completely divergent ecclesiological views. The doctrine of the priestly Old Believers allowed them to believe that a church was still possible and that all the sacraments were still valid because Antichrist was not yet reigning. The priestless Old Believers, believing as they did that Antichrist reigned already in a spiritual fashion, no longer trusted in a church. The second and the third article of the 1694 Novgorod council required converts from any other faith to be rebaptized in the old Christian faith because, as it was said in article 2, "an heretical baptism is not a baptism, but a defilement" (50). Article 4 prescribed that all couples converting to the Old Orthodox Faith were to be warned by the wardens and spiritual fathers of the community that the True Church of the priestless Old Believers does not accept married people; if, in spite of this limitation, the

another God, not their Jesus Christ, but Antichrist himself who mocked the true Jesus by misspelling his name.

50 See an example of discussion of the Nikonian baptism and of the necessity for Old Believers to be rebaptized in N.S. Sarafanova, 'Prenie vernogo inoka s otstupnikom'. For a general discussion of rebaptism in the Old Faith, see P.S. Smirnov, 'Spory v raskole'.

would-be converts were still determined to join the true church, they must take a vow of chastity, stop all sexual intercourse with one another and cease regarding themselves as husband and wife: after rebaptism the spouses were only allowed to consider themselves tied to each other by a bond of "spiritual siblinghood" under their spiritual father. In article 5 the connection between the extinction of priesthood and the prohibition of marriage was clearly made: "We decree the complete rejection of marriage, for the reason that as a consequence of our sins we have entered upon such times in which we are finally deprived of an Orthodox Priesthood. For this reason nobody is empowered to bind by the alliance of marriage, with the exception of the priests of Antichrist; as for marriages without liturgical celebration (bezvenechnye braki) they have been forbidden by Tsar Alexis Comnenos (51). Besides the Apostles says that those who have a wife shall be as if they did not have one". From this article it appears that, as Antichrist had swept away all the sacraments, chastity and virginity were no longer a matter of choice but an obligation for all the faithful.

Old Believers who were married by Nikonian priests or by priests of the priestly Old Believers were called novozheny by the priestless Old Believers. Article 6 severely banned this practice and prohibited the Spiritual Fathers from accepting them at

51 Emperor Alexis I Comnenos (1081-1118) had issued a novella making the marriage ceremony of crowning (venchanie) obligatory for all Christians, free and slaves alike. See J.Meyendorff, Marriage:an Orthodox Perspective, p.30.

confession, until they took an oath not to have intercourse with their wives; a spiritual father who agreed to hear confession from a novozhen, even if old or terminally ill would be excommunicated. Article 7 prescribed that everyone must live in virginity and guard himself as much as possible from uniting with women. The spiritual fathers were expected to supervise with severity the implementation of this rule; in case of failure to do so they would not be allowed to continue in their office. The priestless Old Believers had no priests, but they had spiritual elders who exercised spiritual guidance over their flock, which was composed of "spiritual children". Article 8 dealt with those spiritual children who would not obey the prescription of chastity and decided to marry, disregarding the orders of their spiritual fathers. They would be married by "heretical priests", or by "Russian priests who serve Antichrist" or would simply go and live together with the blessing of their parents and would in such a fashion beget children; but if then they should want to be accepted for confession or to invite one of the spiritual fathers to their home to baptize their children their request was not to be granted. Spiritual fathers who yielded to their demands would be deprived of their office. Article 9 is of interest because it shows that the Old Believers did not regard themselves as being immoderately strict in their demands. They sincerely believed that they were the only legitimate preservers of the Orthodox Faith. For this reason they considered all other "self-styled Christians" as nothing better than what the Orthodox Church had traditionally considered voluntary apostates from the

faith. Such apostates were punished by the church with a period of excommunication of 20 years. In this perspective Nikonian Christians were considered apostates in the understanding that the Old Believers church was the only legitimate heir of the church as it was before the council of 1666/67. If they decided to join the Old Believers they could not therefore be regarded as converts, but as apostates coming back to where they belonged. The Old Believers who drafted the articles of 1694 wanted to be thought of as merciful; thus they stated that in spite of the fact that the proper thing to do would be to insist on an excommunication of 20 years, "in consideration of the infirmities of contemporary humanity" they would accept Christians within the Church without any period of excommunication as long as they separated without delay from their spouses. From article 10 it clearly transpires that before 1694 the policy towards marriage was not by any means clear: novozheny who until then had been allowed to participate fully in the religious life of the community were to be corrected by means of an ecclesiastical penance (epitimiya) and be made to accept separation. Article 11 indicates that a loophole was left for those Old Believers who in spite of having undertaken the obligation of chastity were too weak to comply without occasionally yielding to the temptations of the flesh. If the previous articles, stating the rules, as they did, could be regarded as a definition of sin, article 11 served the purpose of defining how transgressors were to be dealt with. If by the birth of a baby it should have been proved that a couple of either starozheny or novozheny had sinned against the

rule of chastity, such a couple would be punished with a period of excommunication of 40 days; in this period of excommunication both parents were to perform 1000 prostrations a day. A second evidence of sin, i.e., a second birth, was punished with an excommunication period of a whole year, while a third birth was punished with six years of excommunication, to which was added the prohibition for all Christians to share baths and meals with the sinful couple. For those who gave evidence of having sinned a fourth time the consequences were irreparable: they would be excommunicated for ever and excluded from the community. It must be stressed that in article 11 this resolution was regarded as a conditional act of indulgence towards human foibles. Young Old Believers were rightly considered to be the ones most in danger of being led astray by false doctrines appealing to their sensuality. Thus article 12 prescribed precautions against exposing the young to corrupt influences. Old Believers who did not comply with the rules, especially novozheny, should not be visited at home; what was particularly to be avoided by the not very knowledgeable were discussions of religious matters with them, for corruption could ensue and the unity of the church could be undermined. Even stricter precautions were to be taken regarding young men and women in order to avoid indulgence in talk concerning marriage, or other matters which could result in the perdition of the soul and in sin; "For young people are more inclined to weakness than to edification, and because from a single tiny spark of fire large buildings burn down: likewise when these young hearts hear of marriage, the fire of sensual excitement flares up in their young hearts, and they put

themselves against us on the question of marriage". One aspect of the spiritual theory of Antichrist was the belief that his incarnation and manifestation were not limited to the physical confines of one specifically delimited individual incarnation, but spread itself whenever and wherever there was sin. For this reason the contact with sinners and transgressors was regarded as extremely dangerous for the virtue and salvation of the faithful; contact with sinners could lead astray not only in the more immediate and confined sense of exposing to a pernicious example, as it was feared in Article 12, but also in the more sinister sense of coming into contact with one of the manifold manifestations of the Spiritual Antichrist. Thus Article 13 prescribed the following:

"Without need and necessity do not visit such people in their homes, where mind and conscience become damaged. But if for some necessity one should have to enter their homes, then - whether they belong to the church or be novozheny - you must not pay respect to their icons, and you must not when entering or when leaving say 'For Christ's sake', because in them it is not Christ that lives, but Antichrist; you can only say, as it is the custom, 'Excuse me'(prosti) and 'Your Health' (zdorovo)".

It was the duty of the spiritual elders of the community to strengthen their flock by means of their irreproachable example. Thus article 14 prohibited the Spiritual Fathers from receiving women and girls and their spiritual daughters in their cells. Before 1694 there had been cases of bad behaviour among the Spiritual Fathers themselves, as it appears from article 15 which orders women who have been involved with elders, causing Christians to acquire a bad reputation, to be made to repent and

sent to some other place, far away from male company. Relations should be altogether severed with those Spiritual Fathers who were not prepared to comply with the new rules (Art.16)(52).

These Articles of the council of 1694 mark, as said earlier, an important turning point: they define irrevocably the rules of the priestless Old Believers, and they constitute the act of foundation and codification of the priestless branch of the Old Belief. In these articles the relationship of the priestless Old Believers to the Nikonians and to the priestly Old Believers was fixed for years to come. The prohibition of marriage was clearly formulated, and dispositions were made of how to deal with transgressors. Throughout the history of the priestless Old Believers these articles remained the authoritative point of reference. They were also the source of innumerable discussions on how to handle new developments in the life of the Old Believers when the need to depart from these articles would be felt. In a sense the history of all subsequent debates can be seen as an attempt to deal with, sometimes to circumvent, the strict enforcement of these uncompromising articles. Such debates are the subject of the next chapters.

Feodosy Vasil'ev drafted the Articles of 1694 (53). For this reason he should be acknowledged not only as the founding Father

52 The remaining articles forbade cohabitation and copulation of men and women (art.17), contained prescriptions against the consumption of food defiled by the heretics and the use of defiled plates and cutlery (Articles 18-19). Lastly, art. 20, expressed the solemn intention to observe all the preceding articles.

53 See Prigovor ili ulozhenie, p. 045: Feodosy Vasil'ev

of the Theodosians, as his followers were called, but also as the first to lay down the rules for "bezpopovstvo", i.e., priestlessness. In 1697 Iov, a fierce enemy of the Old Believers, became Metropolitan of Novgorod (54). He tried to have Feodosy arrested, and as soon as Feodosy heard of this he took refuge in Poland, which he reached in 1699 (55). In Poland he organised a new community of Old Believers in the uezd of Nevelsk, volost of Krapivinska, in the forests belonging to the Polish Pan Kunicki near the village of Rusanova (56). Feodosy's son, Evstraty, put his father's escape in a more noble light by pointing out that in moving to Poland Feodosy did not have so much his personal security in mind, as the missionary purpose of spreading the true faith to other lands (57). In Poland Feodosy founded two communities, one for men and one for women. Although the communities were composed exclusively of lay members, they were based on strictly monastic principles, inspired by the rule of Basil the Great (58). Feodosy was strict in demanding the observance of chastity and the preservation of virginity, and did not hesitate before inflicting heavy corporal punishments on those who had been found guilty of transgression (59). In order to avoid any occasion of sin, he enforced strict separation of the sexes, forbidding even common conversations. The

concludes the articles stating that he is their drafter.

54 P. Justinov, op.cit., p. 270.

55 Evstraty Feodoseevich, op.cit., p. 78.

56 P. Justinov, op.cit., p. 391.

57 Evstraty Feodoseevich, op.cit., p. 78.

58 Justinov, op.cit., p. 393.

59 Evstraty Feodoseevich, op.cit., p. 79.

community had a hospital, a special house of charity for the old and the sick, and a common refectory; communion of property was enforced, clothes and shoes and other items of everyday necessity were distributed from the common treasury (60). Nobody was allowed to keep personal objects in his cell, and poverty enjoined on all. A major portion of the day was devoted to prayer. The community succeeded in building up a reputation of piety and holiness which made it into a centre of attraction for people of social prominence who went there to spend periods of spiritual retreat or to end their days. Feodosy's spiritual guidance was what these people were looking for, according to Evstraty's somewhat romantic account (61).

The community across the Polish border was apparently quite prosperous, enough at least to whet the appetite of Polish frontier soldiers who subjected it to their attacks (62). Eventually Feodosy Vasil'ev, who had heard of the ukaz of Peter I of 1702, which he interpreted as granting general religious toleration (63) decided to move back to Russia. He went to

60 P. Justinov, op.cit., p. 393.

61 Evstraty (op.cit., p.80) speaks of boyars who left their property, homes and serfs in order to be accepted in the community. He mentions Zakhar Bedrinsky and his son Larion, who are also mentioned as dvoryane in the denunciation of 1719 of a certain Petr Tyukhov, a soldier: see Ryapinskiya raskol'niki, pp. 89-90. According to Evstraty's account it would appear that some of the most prominent people of Peter's time enjoyed Feodosy's company. Among those mentioned there are the boyar Boris Petrovich Sheremetev (1652-1729) who was in fact many times in Poland, Prince Aleksandr Danilovich Menshikov (1673-1729), the boyar Simeon Grigorevich Naryshkin, who was Peter's General Aide, General Mikhail Mikhailovich Argamokov, who was stolnik at Peter's court. Other names mentioned are Yakov Korsakov's, Lev Chebyshev's, and Antony Alekseev's.

62 P. Justinov, op.cit., p. 413.

63 See PSZ, vol.IV, n.1910, 4 April 1702.

Novgorod on 4 April 1708 and he received permission from Peter's favourite, Prince A.D.Menshikov, to settle with his coreligionists in Menshikov's lands in the uezd of Velikolutsk, and live there freely worshipping God according to the Old Books (64). In spite of Menshikov's protection the Old Believers had a hard time because of the bad harvests of 1705-1712. The hungry Theodosians therefore asked Prince Menshikov for permission to settle on more fertile lands. In 1710 Menshikov gave them permission to settle in the farm of Ryapina, in the Pskov region, uezd of Derpt. Unfortunately the Old Believers found themselves in the power of the voevoda Iakov Korsakov who had received orders to escort them to their new place of settlement. Apparently Korsakov was irritated because he failed to extract from the Theodosians as big a bribe as he had demanded. Meanwhile a plague in 1710-1711 added to the troubles of the community; the survivors now found that their food provisions exceeded their needs (65). Eventually Feodosy lost patience with Korsakov and decided to go himself to Novgorod and obtain a written permission to settle in Ryapina. But he had not foreseen what an angry Korsakov could do; he let Feodosy fall into the hands of Metropolitan Iov of Novgorod. The Metropolitan first tried to exhort Feodosy to abandon the Old Faith. When he failed, he had him thrown into a dark and damp dungeon where

64 P. Justinov, op.cit., p.604.

65 From 1709 to 1712 there was an epidemic of plague which from the Balkans spread to the South of Russia. Pskov had a very high mortality rate, while Novgorod and St.Petersburg remained exempt. See J.T.Alexander, Bubonic Plague, pp. 21-22.

Feodosy died after four weeks of detention, on 23 July 1711. A consequence of his death as a captive was that he came to be regarded as a martyr and a saint (66). After Feodosy's death, the Theodosians decided to move to Ryapina without waiting for an ukaz. They took with them the relics of Feodosy's body in order to bury them in the site of the new community. This they did in December 1711. Ryapina soon developed into the main Theodosian centre. Like its Polish predecessor, it was divided in two compounds, one for men and one for women (67).

The Ryapina community was disbanded in 1719, and many of its members arrested, when a certain Petr Tyukhov, a soldier, denounced them for allegedly harbouring deserters (68). Those who survived escaped to Poland. A long time was to pass before the Theodosians succeeded in building for themselves another centre of comparable importance.

66 P. Justinov, op.cit., pp. 605-614.

67 P. Justinov, op.cit., p. 696. On the attempt to find the library of the Ryapina community, see G.B. Markelov, 'Pribaltiyskie nakhodki 1977 goda'. A list of books confiscated from some Old Believer peasant of Ryapina is in ODDS, vol. XXIII (1743), St. Petersburg, 1911, pp. 760-762 (Appendix IX).

68 See Ryapinskiya raskol'niki, pp. 89-90. See also P. Justinov, op.cit., pp. 711-714.

Chapter 2

Theodosians and Pomoryans

The 1690s was a formative period in the history of the priestless Old Believers. To begin with, in 1691 the practice of self-immolation for the sake of seeking martyrdom had been subjected to serious criticism, thus paving the way for an abandonment of this practice by the more moderate Old Believers (1).

This was followed by the codification of the rules of the priestless Old Believers at the Novgorod councils of 1692 and 1694. Lastly, the year 1695 saw the creation of what was to become the most prominent cultural centre of the priestless Old Believers, the Vyg community (2).

The Vyg community, situated on the river of the same name, was the direct heir of the Solovetskii monastery which had witnessed the staunchest rebellion against the introduction of the new

1 See N.S.Demkova, 'Iz istorii ranney staroobryadcheskoy literatury', about the newly discovered first criticism of the practice, and the elder Evfrosin's Otrazitel'noe pisanie; see also I.Ya.Syrtsov, Samosozhigatel'stvo sibirskikh staroobryadtsev; D.I.Sapozhnikov, Samosozhzhenie v russkom raskole; P.S.Smirnov, Vnutrennie voprosy, pp.53-82 and by the same author, Spory i razdeleniya, pp.353-363; J.Stchoukine, Le suicide collectif dans le Raskol russe; V.V.Vinogradov, 'O samosozhzhenii u raskol'nikov (XVII-XX vv.)'; R.B. Myuller, 'Iz istorii raskola na severe Rossii'.

2 The date of 1695 for the foundation of the community has been established in the recent research of M.L.Sokolovskaya, 'Severnoe raskol'nich'e obshchezhitel'stvo', p.157. On the Vyg community see: R.O.Crummey, The Old Believers and the world of Antichrist, (and bibliography).

liturgies (3). The petitions that the Solovki monks had addressed to Tsar Aleksey Mikhailovich in order to prevent the betrayal of the Old Faith became standard texts to be found in most Old Believer manuscript anthologies (4). After a siege of eight years, on the night between 21 and 22 January 1676, the Solovetskij monastery was stormed by the Tsar's troops. A week later, on 29 January, Aleksey Mikhailovich, who had until then enjoyed good health, died of a mysterious illness.

His sudden death was interpreted by the Old Believers as a divine punishment for having approved the ecclesiastical reform (5). Some monks who had managed to escape became missionaries on the main land, and preached resistance to Nikon's reforms. They were welcome by the population which, already during the siege, had

3 On the Solovetskij monastery and the rebellion that took place there, see D.S.Likhachev, 'Solovki v istorii russkoy kul'tury', see also N.A.Barsukov, Solovetskoe vosstanie 1668-1676 gg.; I.Ya.Syrtsov, Vozmushchenie solovetskikh monakhov-starobryadtsev v XVII veke; A.M.Borisov, Khozyaistvo Solovetskago monastyrya.

4 The monks sent in all five petitions to Aleksey Mikhailovich. Their text can be found in N.I.Subbotin, Materialy dlya istorii raskola za pervoe vremya ego suchchestvovaniya, vol.III, pp.45-47 (first petition), pp.160-164 (second petition); pp.164-171 (third petition); pp.208-211 (fourth petition) and pp.217-262 (fifth petition). The last one, also known as 'obshirnaya chelobitnaya', was drafted by the treasurer of the monastery, Geronty, and, more than a petition to the Tsar, it can be regarded as the Old Believers' declaration of faith. It was reproduced many times in anthologies of the Old Believers. See P.Pascal, op.cit., pp.413-415 for an analysis of the text.

5 Some Old Believer preachers carried around stories that on his death bed Aleksey Mikhailovich would have realized his mistake, seeing how God punished him for his apostasy, would have repented and sent, too late, an order to desist from the siege of the monastery. See P.S.Smirnov, Istoriya russkogo raskola, p.86.

expressed its support of the pious monks by sending them supplies of food (6). The area of Olonets, where the refugee-monks were preaching, was a thinly populated region. There, as in the areas of Arkhangelsk, Perm and of the North in general, the Orthodox Church and monasteries were few and scattered. The population might be left for years, sometimes for a lifetime, without seeing a priest, Christians might die without receiving communion and confession, infants might have to be baptized by laymen, couples would have to enter into married life without the blessing of a priest. What had been priestless Orthodoxy in practice could easily turn into priestless Orthodoxy doctrinally (7). Besides, the area, scarcely populated as it was, seemed ideal for the foundation of hermitages. In late December 1692 two young boys, Andrey Denisov (1674-1730) and a certain Ioann Beloutov put on their skis and abandoned their native homes to found such a hermitage in proximity of the river Vyg and establish contact with the neighbouring hermitages (8). In 1695, after a first settlement was destroyed by fire, they succeeded in laying the foundation of the Vygovskaya pustyn'. Two years later Andrey Denisov was joined by his brother Semen (1682-1741). In September 1702 Andrey Denisov was elected nastoyatel' (leader) of the community (9).

6 N.A.Barsukov, op.cit., pp.38-39; I.Ya.Syrtsov, op.cit., p.266.

7 P.S.Smirnov, op.cit., p. 93.

8 R.O.Crummey, op.cit., p. 61. Ivan Filippov, Istoriya Vygovskoy staroobryadcheskoy pustyni, pp. 98-99.

9 See P.Hauptmann, 'Das Gemeindeleiteramt'. In Vyg all offices were allocated on the principle of collegial election from the council of elders, or sobor. See E.D.Barsov ed., 'Ulozhenie brat'ev Denisovykh'. See also D.Ostrovsky, Vygovskaya pustyn', pp. 47-53; Ostrovsky examines the functions of the Sobor as an

From the very beginning there had been women at Vyg. In 1706 a separate community was founded for them on the Leksa river, about 12 miles away; it was placed under the leadership of Andrey Denisov's younger sister, Solomonina (10).

Andrey Denisov and the Old Believers gathered around him saw the purpose of the community in the preservation of the traditions of their pious ancestors. Ivan Filippov (1661-1744), who was leader at Vyg from 1741 until the year of his death, observed that if even "the ancient Hellenes" had paid honour to their ancestors, all the more reason to honour the Russian forefathers who were "pious, Christian and virtuous". The mission of Vyg was to keep

institution. Incidentally, his observations are quite appropriate to water down Cherniavsky's speculations about the principle of sobornost' - rather than an ideal, the sobor was an institution which was opposed to the mir on which it exercised its authority. See M.Chernyavsky, 'The Old Believers and the new Religion'. The sobor was not a peculiarity of the Old Believers; it was contemplated also in the rules of Evfrosin of Pskov and of Iosif of Volokolamsk: see I.Smolitsch, Russische Moenchtum, p. 258 and A.A.Savich, Solovetskaya votchina v XV-XVII v., pp. 209-210. The organisation of Vyg diverged only in one thing from the typical structure of a monastery: at Vyg they had the office of starosta (lay elder), which had been imposed by the state when Vyg entered into an agreement for the production of iron. See R.O.Crummey, op.cit., pp. 110-111. This office gave the Vyg community an institutional form approaching that of a peasant commune and induced some populist historians to see the Vyg monastery as a peasant commune. See e.g., N.Aristov, 'Ustroystvo raskol'nich'ikh obshchin'. In 1767 the starosta presented Vyg's instruction to the Legislative Commission: see Nakaz Olonetskogo uезда.

10 See R.O.Crummey, op.cit., pp. 64-72: even before the foundation of a separate compound for the women, special precautions had been taken to avoid promiscuity. The Leksa compound had a separate administration that was subordinate to Vyg for all matters which concerned the community as a whole; women did not participate in the formulation of general policies and did not take part in the general councils. See also V.Sreznevsky ed., Leksinskiy letopisets.

alive the "source of wisdom" (11). In the High Middle Ages the European cultural heritage had been preserved in the monasteries. Likewise the Vyg community had a monastic inspiration. Respect for the monastic vocation was very strong in the Russian religious tradition, besides in the region of Olonets the life of the hermit was regarded as both attractive and holy (12). The ideal religious life was ascetic and monastic in character. Specifically, Andrey Denisov's dream was the creation of a community of pious men on the model of the Solovetskiy monastery (13).

The Denisov Brothers, Ivan Filippov and other leaders of the community repeatedly stressed how Vyg was heir to the tradition of piety of Solovki; that Vyg was an outgrowth of the Solovetskiy monastery, rooted in the rule and benediction of its fathers (14).

The translatio of old Russian piety from Solovki to Vyg was the central idea of the Istoriya o ottsekh i stradal'tsekh Solovetskikh (History of the Fathers and martyrs of Solovki), the masterpiece of Semen Denisov (15). The mission of Vyg was

11 Ivan Filippov, op.cit., p. 76.

12 R.O.Crummey, op.cit., pp.26-38.

13 R.O.Crummey, op.cit., p.107.

14 See e.g., how Andrey Denisov relates the story of the foundation of Vyg in his Nadgrobnoe slovo Petru Prokop'evu - (Druzhinin n.148). Ivan Filippov, op.cit., p. 86, compares the Solovkii tradition to "the sparkle in coal or fragrant crism in alabaster" - this image he takes from the above-mentioned Nadgrobnoe slovo, p.531.

15 There are many manuscript copies of this text, and some printed ones, such as the Suprasl' editions of 1788, 1789, 1786, and the illuminated Pochaev edition of 1794 which was reprinted in Moscow in 1913. Another famous work of Semen Denisov is Vinograd Rossiyskiy ili opisaniye postradavshikh v Rossii za

considered to be the preservation of piety and of a religious life which were being threatened by the process of change and modernization promoted by the state - that is, by Antichrist, to put it as the Old Believers did. All the major literary productions of Vyg, notably the Pomorskie otvety (Pomoryan answers) composed by Andrey Denisov, conveyed this sense of a deeply felt duty to preserve intact what had been handed "ready-made" to Russia by Prince Vladimir (16). A school of rhetorics ensured that Vyg's cultural standards remained high (17).

In Solovki, the abbot could be elected directly by the sobor, or council of elders, because no institutional outside authority was recognised. Likewise, in Vyg the office of nastoyatel' was an elective one.

But there was also an important difference: while the independence of the Solovetsky monastery in the election of its abbot was a privilege, in the case of Vyg it could not in any event have been otherwise as there was no longer a recognised church authority. While in Solovki the competence of the sobor was confined to the internal administration of one single monastery, albeit an important one, of the many in the Russian Orthodox Church which was headed by the Patriarch, the Vyg sobor had no authority above it. It constituted the supreme instance of power

drevletserkovnoe blagochestie (Druzhinin n.3), of which there are many manuscript copies and an edition printed in Moscow in 1906. 16 Of Andrey Denisov's Pomorskie otvety (Druzhinin n. 316) there are numerous manuscript copies, and an edition printed in Moscow in 1911. See also Johannes Chrysostomus, Die "Pomorskie otvety".

17 See V.G.Druzhinin, 'Slovesnyya nauki', and N.V.Ponyrko, 'Uchebniki ritoriki'.

for all priestless Old Believers not only in administrative, but also in dogmatic, liturgical, and moral questions (18). One cannot stress too much this loss of equilibrium inside what the priestless Old Believers regarded as the only true church. Before the schism, there was a Patriarch who kept both black and white clergy under his authority. Since the schism, all authority among Old Believers and all supervision of the faithful rested in a sobor which was composed only of celibate laymen whose life was inspired by a monastic ideal. Deprived of the guidance of an Orthodox white clergy, the Old Believers found themselves morally subjected to an authority which seemed to acknowledge only monastic values (19).

The laity proper was thus left without a defined place inside priestless Old Believer Christendom: instead of recognition, it could only find toleration, instead of being inside the "invisible church" it found itself at its margins - in the triumph of the monastic ideal, the world, the mir, remained on the fringe.

18 D.Ostrovsky, op.cit., p.52.

19 The absence of a white clergy was also reflected in the character of the liturgies; much time was occupied by devotional exercises, but because of the lack of ordained priests the eucharist could not be celebrated and was replaced by a ceremony of remembrance of the last supper. Ordinary liturgies were replaced by long sessions of prayer. In order to do this, the priestless Old Believers distinguished between sacraments which were "indispensable and necessary" and sacraments which were simply "necessary": baptism, confession and the eucharist belonged to the first group. See P.S.Smirnov, Istoriya russkago raskola, p.95; R.O.Crummey, op.cit., p. 113, and D.Ostrovsky, op.cit., p. 58.

Given the monastic inspiration of the Vyg community, it is no surprise that relations between the sexes were subjected to strict and detailed regulation, all the more so as marriage was not contemplated even for the laity.

To sum up, in the 1690s the priestless Old Believers, both at the Novgorod councils of 1692 and 1694, and with the establishment of a community, Vyg, which was inspired by a strict monastic ideal, chose a form of Christianity which ruled out the legitimacy of married life. Celibacy was no longer one of two possible options; it was the rule. In principle, chastity was the way of life not only inside the walls of the Vyg and Leksa monastic communities, but also outside for all those who pursued the Christian ideal.

We now turn to the first debate about marriage, which involved Andrey Denisov and Feodosy Vasil'ev, before returning again to the Vyg community, in order to examine its relation to the neighbouring communities which accepted its spiritual guidance. In the analysis of this relationship it will be possible to see how the monastic ideal was transformed in contact with the practice of lay life.

The 1694 Novgorod articles had been drafted by Feodosy Vasil'ev, who also played a crucial role in the first important discussion of the question of marriage among the priestless Old Believers. As we have seen the community of Feodosy Vasil'ev in Polish lands was, like Vyg, organized on monastic lines. Nevertheless, in 1700 a disagreement arose on the question of marriage. The Vyg

fathers strongly disapproved of Feodosy because he accepted the starozheny without requiring them to divorce and allowed them to have children; they had been informed of this practice by inspectors whom they had sent to check the orthodoxy of the Polish community (20). Feodosy Vasil'ev, if this was the case, was indeed in the wrong as according to the letter of the 1694 Novgorod articles he had himself drafted starozheny, or anyone else for that matter, were not allowed to have children. Article 11 of the Novgorod council prescribed penalties for starozheny who by childbearing would provide evidence of sin. On the other hand, if he in practice allowed the starozheny of his community to beget children, this may be taken as an indication of the spirit in which Feodosy would have liked the articles to be interpreted. It may indeed confirm the impression that article 11 was a deliberate loophole which would allow the combination of doctrinal coherence with de facto permissiveness (21).

In 1700 Andrey Denisov sent a long letter to Feodosy Vasil'ev in Poland in an attempt to try and induce him to abandon this practice (22). From Andrey's letter to Feodosy it appears that Feodosy Vasil'ev, who had probably been taken by surprise by unexpected criticism, had found no better answer to defend his practice than to refer to an homily by Iosif Volotsky (1440?-

20 P.S.Smirnov, Spory i razdeleniya, p. 135 and by the same author, 'Nachalo bezpopovshchinskoy polemiki po voprosu o brake'.

21 See chapter 1.

22 P.S.Smirnov, 'Nachalo...', p.214. Correctly P.O.Lyubopytnyi sees in this letter the beginning of the debate among the priestless Old Believers on the question of marriage, but he gives 1708 as a date: see his Kratkoe skazanie.

1515) which had been written in defence of monastic life (23).

Iosif Volotsky in his homily quotes Clement, the pupil of St. Peter, who recounts how Peter in Rome christened a certain Sofia, her husband and 3000 other Romans; of these 160 embarked upon a monastic way of life, while the others "took the way of life they chose", i.e., were not asked to take vows of chastity (24). Iosif's purpose in quoting the episode was well known: he wanted to defend the legitimacy of the monastic way of life against the Judaizers who regarded monks as being no better than the ancient heretics who denied the legitimacy of marriage (25). Feodosy and the spiritual fathers of his community chose instead to make a rather personal use of the homily. To begin with, they claimed that it had been written against "Lutherans and Calvinists"; now, if it is true that the rejection of monasticism was typically Protestant, Iosif, who had died in 1515, could by no means have had such an opponent in mind. One wonders if it was ignorance on Feodosy's part or perhaps the inclination to see any heresy as coming from abroad, from Germany, rather than from pious Novgorod, which had nevertheless become the centre of the Judaizers. More to the point, Feodosy made use of this quotation because he realized that it could also be interpreted in the sense of allowing married people to continue their marital

23 P.S.Smirnov, op.cit., p. 221, and Iosif Volotsky, Prosvetitel' ili oblichenie eresi zhidostvuyushchikh, 11th Homily, pp.413-415.

24 P.S.Smirnov, op.cit., p. 377. There is a Clement known for the letter he wrote from Rome to Corinth, but this Clement is not the one considered the first of the Apostolic Fathers and Bishop of Rome. See J.Irmscher, The pseudo-clementines, pp.532-570.

25 On the Judaizers, see J.Howlett, "The heresy of the Judaizers," Kazakova, Lur'e, Antifeodal'nye...; Luria, "Unresolved Issues..."

relationship even after baptism in the Old Faith. In fact, while allowing for monasticism, Peter by no means excluded the possibility of marriage.

A special council was convened at Vyg to discuss the matter and it was by no means satisfied by such thin and indirect evidence. Yet, as Andrey wrote to Feodosy, a very good report had been given about the Polish community in general. For this reason Andrey broached the matter in a most tactful and respectful fashion. "We have heard that you observe the true faith, are zealous about the purity of piety, diligent in praying, fasting and chastity, in the love of your neighbour and of God, in humility, in the imitation of Christ, and have great zeal in the obedience to the Scriptures". Nevertheless, continued Andrey, the Theodosians erred when they allowed the starozheny to remain married, and he believed it his duty to enlighten them on the matter "for salvation lies in the council of many" (26). He pointed out the procedural mistake of Feodosy and his followers who had believed they could ground their practice concerning marriage on the slight evidence of a sentence from an homily the subject of which was not even marriage, but the defence of monasticism. Andrey felt he had to teach them correct usage of the authority of the Scriptures: his was a lesson in methodology. True pastors of souls must not indulge in arbitrary, personal interpretations but rest on the firm ground of the Scriptures and of Ecclesiastical tradition. "In what is written they arm themselves with the Scriptures, for what is not written they

26 Andrey Denisov, Poslanie k Feodosiyu Vasil'evichu p.376.

enlighten themselves with ecclesiastical traditions and costum " (27). Peter's words in the account of St.Clement, quoted in their turn by Iosif of Volotsk, were by no means relevant to the question of marriage, argued Andrey, as they were not addressed to married people only, but to both sexes, of all ages and walks of life. From Peter's words "let the other do as they wish", words which had been pronounced having in mind those who did not take monastic vows, it was by no means legitimate to derive rules binding for the church. It certainly was stretching the point to infer that according to these words husband and wife, who had been married before baptism, could remain married, while those who had already been christened could no longer marry. Such an interpretation was purely arbitrary; it did not constitute an Apostolic rule, but a personal judgement only (28). For those words were of so indefinite a meaning, observed Andrey, that they could equally well be used to justify marriage after baptism, or even cohabitation, perhaps even promiscuity, without any need for the intervention and the regulation of the Church: which would cause great disorder and scandal among the Christians. In other words, silence and omissions are not a basis for a sound judgement: "And if one dared to interpret a passing remark [kratkorechennyya rechi] as meaning that the ancient Christians gave their daughters in marriage without ceremony [brakovenchanie] would not this be madness and derangement of the intellect?" (29). The fathers of the Church had warned against such errors of interpretation, and had recommended reference to

27 Andrey Denisov, op.cit., p. 371.

28 Andrey Denisov, op.cit., p. 377.

29 Andrey Denisov, op.cit., p. 379.

clear witnesses, not to hurried passing remarks or statements. Thus Basil the Great had written, in Andrey Denisov's quotation, "The words of the Holy Scriptures which seem doubtful and obscure are to be explained, expounded and interpreted by explicit and clear propositions from other passages of the Scriptures - one must not interpret explicit words by means of obscure and implicit ones, but by means of the explicit ones must one explain obscure passages" (30).

What Andrey Denisov meant by Scriptures becomes clear from his reference to the Kormchaya, the book of Russian canon law (31). In fact, continued Andrey, if a Christian wants to be enlightened about the correct doctrine of marriage, the Kormchaya is the text he must turn to: there in its fifty first chapter, is an explicit exposition of the doctrine of marriage (32). It would have been amusing to observe Andrey Denisov's reaction on learning that Chapter 51, to which he attributed such weighty authority in solving the question of marriage, was based on nothing less than a Catholic ritual, the Rituale Romanum of 1614 (33) of a period, therefore, which was posterior both to the schism of 1054

30 Andrey Denisov, op.cit., p. 380.

31 On the Kormchaya, see I.Žužek, Kormčaja Kniga.

32 On this chapter of the Kormchaya, which according to the 1650 edition published under Patriarch Iosif, whom the Old Believers recognised, was the fifty first, while in the edition of 1653 published under Nikon, whom the Old Believer did not recognise, was the fiftieth, see M.Gorchakov O tayne supruzhestva. See also I.Žužek, op.cit., p. 91, and A.S.Pavlov, 50-ya glava Kormchey.

33 See B.Loewemberg, 'Die erstausgabe des Rituale Romanum von 1614'.

between Rome and Eastern Orthodoxy, to the Florentine Council of 1439 and to the fall of Constantinople. This chapter of the Kormchaya, papist in origin as it was, could not therefore claim much legitimacy for the Russian Orthodox Church (34). Chapter 51 of the Kormchaya had first been printed in the Evkhologion or Trebnik of the Metropolitan of Kiev Petr Mogila (1596-1647) in 1646 (35). Patriarch Iosif took it from this text of Mogila's and inserted it in his 1650 edition of the Kormchaya (36). The Patriarch was not aware that by so doing he was introducing into Russian canon law, in a period of intense latinophobia, a collection of texts which exuded Latin ideas, the Rituale Romanum among them. This chapter of the Kormchaya was so foreign to Russian canon law that the 1786 edition provided the reader with a table of explanation into Russian of the degrees of terms

34 M.Gorchakov, op.cit., pp. 373-374.

35 K.V.Kharlampovich, Malorossiyskoe vliyaniye, p.117. The question of Latin influences through the Ukraine on Russian culture and ecclesiastical life would require a thesis of its own. Suffice it to say that the Russian Church was never able to take a clear stand on the matter. For instance, if we consider just Mogila's Trebnik, it was condemned in 1690 by a church council together with other books for containing Catholic and papist ideas. In fact in the 80s and 90s of the seventeenth century the scholars of Kiev defended the Latin doctrine of the transubstantiation of the Eucharist, and were met with a defensive reaction on the part of the Great Russians. Yet the condemnation of books infected with Latin ideas does not seem to have had a lasting effect. See Kharlampovich, op.cit. pp. IV-VII, 49, 445-449 passim. Besides, scholastic influences also penetrated from Byzantium: see G.Podskalsky, Theologie und Philosophie, pp.180-230. It must be pointed out that the prohibition of the Church of the late seventeenth century no longer affected the Old Believers, who continued to use books which had been considered acceptable before the schism without any qualms as for their orthodoxy. The Trebnik of Mogila was such a case.

36 M. Gorchakov, op.cit., p. 2.

defining relations of kinship which were in use in Southwestern Russia but were utterly incomprehensible to the Russians (37). Patriarch Iosif had chosen to introduce it in the collection of Russian canon law because at the time there was no other systematic exposition of the subject. It was in that chapter that for the first time the sacramental character of marriage was explained to the Russians (38). Catherine II stressed in the Nakaz the need for a clear matrimonial legislation (39). Nothing came of it, and as late as 1816, chapter 50 of the Kormchaya had to be inserted in the collection of Russian law for lack of other texts (40). But nobody in Andrey Denisov's time suspected the Latin roots of chapter 50: it was widely believed to be a venerable and ancient text, as ancient as the 'Lay for Igor's campaign', presumably. The first doubts arose only at the end of the eighteenth century, and Metropolitan Filaret was the first to express them in print (41). It would therefore be unfair to accuse Andrey Denisov of ignorance; he believed what everybody in his time believed. Andrey Denisov's quotation from the Kormchaya remained an object of fierce debate among the Old

37 M.Gorchakov, op.cit., p 5-6. The Southwestern Russian words were those used in the Kiev edition of Petr Mogila.

38 M. Gorchakov, op.cit., pp. 213-219.

39 In Art. 289 of the Nakaz, it was said that "With regard to Marriages it would be highly necessary, and of great importance, to define once clearly and with certainly the Degree of Consanguinity in which Matrimony is allowed, and the Degree in which it is forbid". See W.F.Reddaway ed., Documents of Catherine the Great p. 261.

40 M.Gorchakov, op.cit., pp. 232-233.

41 M.Gorchakov, op.cit., pp.7-8.

Believers for years to come: "The sacrament of marriage or legitimate union between man and woman has been instituted by God Christ for the multiplication of the human species, the upbringing of the offspring to the Glory of God in indissoluble union of love and friendship and reciprocal help, and in fortification against the sin of adultery. The substance [veshch'] of this sacrament are husband and wife, who are united in honourable marriage, without any impediment; the form, i.e., the way and the perfection, are the words of the spouses, their internal consent pronounced in front of a priest, for the priest observes that the sacrament is carried out without any impediment and honourably" (42). Andrey concluded that for this reason it was against canon law to recognize marriages celebrated by heretics or to hold that a marriage could be performed in front of anyone but an ordained priest. The Kormchaya, concluded Andrey, speaks very clearly: "The crowning [venchanie] and blessing of marriage must be performed in a church in front of witnesses". For this reason it seemed to Andrey that it was pure slander to accuse the "peaceful and innocent hermits" of prohibiting marriage. It was not they, objected Andrey, but the law which prohibited the celebration of marriages by requiring "a bishop, a priest, and a church in which to celebrate a marriage according to God's will"; without them a union could not be considered legitimate (43).

42 Andrey Denisov, Poslanie ...k Feodisiyu Vasil'evichu, p. 381.

43 Andrey Denisov, op.cit., p. 388.

As for people who were married before their baptism, argued Andrey, their tie was in any case dissolved by the regenerative power of baptism which turns the "Old Man" into the "New Man":

"Baptism sanctifies equally both married and unmarried, purifies both from Adam's original sin and washes away all other actions repellent to God; it does not unite husband and wife whom it purifies from their previous pagan union delivering them as children to God the Father enveloping them in Christ ... For the baptized Christian divests himself from the Old Man decayed in lust, to take on the vestment of the new man in Christ. And because the union with the wife prior to baptism means to continue existing like the Old Man and to put on the Old Man means to put on his actions too - therefore one must abstain from union with one's wife, who has not been given to him with the Church's blessing and sanctification, and take up instead the vest of the New Man; for one and separate is the man, one and separate is the woman, while in marriage one is more, the other is less, one is head to his wife, the other is submitted to him, and they are one and the same flesh ... But baptism invests them equally in Christ ... for in Christ there is neither male, nor female. Baptism delivers into brotherhood, not in corporal communion" (44).

In this passage of Andrey Denisov there is an intense awareness of the powerful regeneration operated by baptism, and in particular by rebaptism in the Old Faith. Writing as he did from Vyg which was a community organized on monastic principle, Andrey would draw on the literature in defence and praise of the monastic way of life. Andrey wrote that there are two ways of salvation offered by the Church, which constitute the two wings by which the Church carries the faithful to Heaven: marriage, and virginity. Only the enemies of the Church, i.e.,

44 Ibid., p. 378.

Luther and Calvin, have abolished monasticism and "founded the whole of human life exclusively on the union with women" (45). Andrey admitted that he believed in the superiority of virginity to married life, but he denied that he had any desire to abolish marriage. What he thought was that marriage had come to an end together with the end of the Church.

It was regarded by him as advisable, in consideration of the Last Days, that those who were free from worldly ties should preserve themselves in purity. In the Last Days, under the dangers of the spiritual rule of Antichrist, Christians ought to be on guard and abstain from all contacts with heretics: therefore it was inconceivable to recognize marriages which had been celebrated by heretics, i.e., by vessels of Antichrist (46).

Summing up, Andrey Denisov in his epistle to Feodosy Vasil'ev defined marriage in such a way as to require as essential to it a Church hierarchy and the celebration by a priest. Any relationship between man and woman other than that blessed by a priest in a church was nothing but fornication. Equally any union which claimed its justification in a marriage ceremony antedating baptism was nothing but fornication. Feodosy Vasil'ev's practice was regarded as a most serious offence, because the body of a baptized Christian is like a

45 Ibid., p. 383.

46 Ibid., p. 374.

member of the body of God's living Church. Thus by defiling his own body one defiles the Church itself, and by so doing earns the retribution of divine, just wrath. "He who destroys God's church, by God shall in his turn be destroyed; by means of baptism a man becomes part of the pure, holy, immaculate church of God; if he destroys the purity of this church with the sins of the flesh, in himself and in others, God will avenge Himself with a revenge furious and terrible, and these sinners will suffer horrible and unbearable pain, in eternal sulphur and fire" (47).

In his reply, written shortly afterwards, Feodosy Vasil'ev put forward a far weightier authority than the account by Clement of St. Peter's baptism of Sofia in Rome (48). This time he based his argument on St. Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians (49).

Feodosy wrote that Andrey's letter had greatly upset him because, as he said echoing Paul's metaphor of the erection of the Church on the foundations laid down by Christ and the Apostles (50), in his argument Andrey was destroying both the building and its very foundations. If Andrey was right, argued Feodosy, then not only his followers in Poland, but also the Fathers of the Church, who observed the rules of the Apostles, would be burning in fire and sulphur. Feodosy rejected vigorously the charge of not following the prescriptions of the Apostles, which Andrey had

47 Andrey Denisov, op.cit., p. 386.

48 Feodosy Vasil'ev, 'Poslanie pol'skikh feodosevtsev k pomortsam o brake'.

49 According to P.S.Smirnov ('Nachalo bezpopovshchinskoy polemiki ...', p. 218), Feodosy Vasil'ev wrote his reply in 1702.

50 I Corinthians 11-15.

brought against him, and he denied that he was acting on the basis of his judgement alone (51). Feodosy had also been rather irritated by Andrey's rhetorical device of pretending he was asking questions while in actual fact he was giving prescriptions (52). According to Feodosy it was Andrey who had been guilty of a breach of Apostolic law. Feodosy argued that marriages celebrated before conversion are legitimate even as they are after the conversion to the old faith. The Kormchaya itself does not prescribe the annulment of marriages celebrated before baptism: it only sets out the procedure for marriages celebrated between Christians (53) Feodosy argued that not only was the permission to the starozheny to continue their marriage after baptism not a breach of Apostolic law, but that the case had been fully examined by the Apostle Paul (54). Paul had clearly prescribed not to separate husband and wife, and John Chrysostom had confirmed this interpretation of his words. Feodosy also referred to the seventy-second rule of the sixth Oecumenical council in Trullo (691-692), which prescribed not to separate spouses when only one of them had embraced the Christian faith and the other had remained an infidel (55). Paul had thought that a believing husband sanctifies his infidel wife, as an infidel husband is sanctified by a believing wife; the purity

51 Feodosy Vasil'ev, op.cit., p. 674.

52 Ibid., p. 675.

53 Ibid., p. 676.

54 Ibid., p. 678.

55 The resolutions of the councils were contained in the Kormchaya. On the sixth council in Trullo, see I.Žužek, op.cit., p. 74.

of the believing partner triumphs over the impurity of the other. Hope of salvation comes to the unenlightened partner from his being associated by the bond of marriage to a Christian (56). Besides, as Paul had preached, all must remain in the state in which they had been found when God called them (57). On the basis of these references to the councils and the teaching of Paul, Feodosy concluded that for Andrey to state that baptism, turning the Old Man into the New Man, cancels marriage and all that belonged to the antebaptismal life was tendentious and the fruit of a personal judgement. Feodosy argued rather that union of the bodies of the spouses should remain even after baptism, because there could be no impurity in a bodily union sanctified by the bond of marriage (58). Feodosy was of the view that Andrey's excess of zeal had made him turn aside from a wise and cautious middle way, which being the best way he called "the way of the Tsar" (59) and go beyond the zeal of the Apostles: "When at the time of the Apostles and of Tsar Constantine and of Prince Vladimir ... not only thousands, but tens of thousands were converted to the Christian Faith and baptized, nobody dared to dissolve their marriages or their relations of kin, or to call them sinners of lust ..." (60). Feodosy also tried to brush

56 Feodosy Vasil'ev, op.cit., p. 682.

57 Ibid., p. 681.

58 Ibid., pp. 680-684.

59 Ibid., p. 672. In 1860 the Old Believer monk Pavel Prussky called Tsarskiy put' a collections of Scriptural quotations in defense of marriage, which he printed in Johannisburg, in Prussia.

60 Feodosy Vasil'ev, op.cit., p. 687.

aside the apocalyptic argument against marriage. He pointed out that the Kirillova Kniga (Book of Cyril) (61) acknowledged marriages and relations of kinship established before baptism as being still valid after.

As for the threatening intimation of the Gospels, "woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days" (62) Feodosy tried to circumvent this obstacle by an ingenious, if somewhat naive, explanation: he suggested that what Christ could have had in mind was how difficult and strenuous it would be on that day for women who were burdened in their womb by pregnancy to run away. If this were the case, the word "woe" would not be a threat or a condemnation, but an expression of divine compassion. In the Last Days, believed Feodosy, human society would be the same as in the days of Noah: there would be adultery, but also legitimate marriage. Feodosy found no indication in the Scriptures to the effect that in the Last Days there would have been no marriage; it would have continued until the Day of the Final Judgement (63). Lastly, Feodosy could not help pointing out how inconsistent it was on the part of the Vyg fathers to condemn married people as sinners (bludniki), while at the same time visiting their houses and receiving alms and

61 The Kirillova Kniga was a polemical encyclopedia composed under the direction of Archpriest Mikhail Rogov. It was so called because it contained, among other things, apocalyptic texts of Cyril of Jerusalem (c. 315-386). It had been printed in Moscow in 1644 (Karataev, n. 563). It enjoyed vast success among the Old Believers who reprinted it in Grodno in 1776 and 1791. See A.I.Lilov, O tak nazyvaemoy Kirillovoy Knige, and H.P. Nies, Kirche in Russland.

62 Matthew, xxiv, 19.

63 Feodosy Vasil'ev, op.cit., pp. 691, 694.

economic assistance from them (64). Feodosy did not change his mind on the question: In 1704 when he wrote a set of six proposals to Vyg, and in 1705, when he wrote again to Vyg (65), he was still of the same opinion and it was only after his death in 1711 that the Theodosians decided to make their practice conform to that of the Vyg community, i.e., not to allow the starozheny to have conjugal relationships leading to childbirth (66). Nevertheless, in his lifetime, in order to keep peace with Vyg, Feodosy Vasil'ev gave assurance that, in spite of allowing the starozheny to cohabit like husband and wife, they would not be allowed to share the same bed and have children. It is likely that Feodosy did not intend to exercise a strict control over the obedience to this order regulating the personal relationships of couples. Andrey Denisov was informed of this, and protested because he had found out that not only did Feodosy not denounce as sinners those who had children, but he even recited prayers for the purification of women after childbirth (67). The question of the inscription to be placed on the cross, was another source of disagreement between the two communities. The Pomoryans accepted the six-letter inscription, namely Ts.S.I.Kh.S.B., which was the acronym for "Tsar' Slavy Isus Khristos Syn Bozhii" (Tsar of Glory Jesus Christ Son of God), Feodosy Vasil'ev did not acknowledge it, and believed the four-letter inscription, I.N.Ts.I., i.e., "Isus Natsaryanin Tsar'

64 Ibid., p. 688.

65 Feodosy Vasil'ev, Vtoroe poslanie.

66 P.S.Smirnov, op.cit., p. 232.

67 P.D. Justinov, 'Feodosevshchina pri zhizni eya osnovatelya', p.402.

Iudeyskii" (Jesus the Nazaren Tsar of the Jews), to be the correct one (68). The custom of drawing on the cross the four-letters inscription had first appeared in Russia in the middle of the seventeenth century, but the more ancient Russian inscription was the simple Is.Khr., i.e., Isus Khristos. At the monastery of Solovki before its fall in 1676, the four-letter inscription had been rejected by the deacon Ignaty who believed it to be a heresy. Ignaty thought that it would have given great pleasure to the devilish army of Antichrist to see the Redeemer labelled a simple Nazarene, a man like any other. The Old Believers of the North Sea shores and of Vyg, who were under the influence of Solovki teachings, accepted Ignaty's view. They would either destroy or correct the crosses with four-letter inscriptions. In Novgorod, where Feodosy Vasil'ev was influential, the crosses with the inscription of six letters which were venerated in Vyg were declared heretical (69). It is worth stressing as symptomatic of the Old Believers frame of mind that the question of the cross and the question of marriage were regarded as being equally important. The different weight they had on social life had no bearing whatsoever in assessing their relative importance, as is shown by the fact that the break between Theodosians and Pomoryans took place on the question of the inscription on the cross.

68 Only in the middle of the eighteenth century did Theodosians accept the six-letter inscriptions. P.S.Smirnov, Spory i razdeleniya, pp. 283-310.

69 P.S.Smirnov, Vnutrennie Voprosy, pp.193, 201-204, and, by the same author, Spory i razdeleniya, p. 283. The deacon Ignaty had also written a petition to Tsar Aleksey Mikhailovich on the question of the inscription: it is printed at the pp. 045-047 of P.S.Smirnov, Vnutrennie voprosy.

In 1703 Feodosy wrote to Vyg a thirteen-point request to the effect that Vyg should accept the four-letter inscription on the cross, that the starozheny should be considered legitimately married, that the strictest separation from the Nikonians should be observed in eating and drinking, and that Vyg should discontinue the practice of acknowledging monks who had been tonsured in Nikonian churches prior to the conversion to the old faith (70). The last request might at first sight seem to be at odds with the Theodosian practice of accepting the starozheny, but in fact they believed that there was an apostolic pronouncement specifically contemplating the case of couples married before conversion, while they naturally could not find anything of the sort for the case of monks tonsured before baptism. The acceptance of monks of the Nikonian church would have seemed as incongruous to their priestless point of view as accepting priests from the Nikonian church.

In fact, in a conciliatory reply of 1703, Andrey Denisov denied the validity of the accusation that Nikonian monks found recognition in Vyg; the actual practice was to have Nikonian monks rebaptized, disavow their previous tonsure, and pronounce new vows (71). Andrey was not impressed by Feodosy's failure to acknowledge the monastic way of life of a certain Gavriil Evtikhinov of Vyg, as he had previously agreed to do. It appears that after an initial recognition Feodosy had changed his mind

70 Feodosy Vasil'ev, Poslanie na Vyg; P.S.Smirnov, Spory i razdeleniya, pp. 252, 284.

71 See P.S.Smirnov, op.cit., p. 254; P.I. Justinov, 'Feodosevshchina', p. 398, and Andrey Denisov, Poslanie v Pol'shu.

and regarded it as uncanonical for a layman to take monastic vows from a simple monk, while Andrey took from the Apostolic church examples of men who had adopted a monastic way of life without being consecrated by an ordained priest and of tonsures blessed by simple monks, without the intervention of a priest (72). As for the cross, Andrey offered peace terms suggesting that both inscriptions should be accepted by both sides (73). The question of marriage seems to have been viewed with more subtlety. It pleased Andrey that Feodosy no longer acknowledged the marriages of people who, having been baptized according to the true faith before the schism had then married in Nikonian churches (starozheny starogo kreshcheniya) and of people who having been rebaptized in the Old Faith had then got married in Nikonian churches, or with priests of Nikonian ordination. Christians thus married were not supposed to have children because the Fathers of the Theodosian community, unordained as they were, did not have the power to absolve them in confession from their sins. Andrey was nevertheless disturbed to realize that in case of a transgression resulting in childbirth, the Theodosian Fathers would not count that as a sin, and would agree to recite prayers

72 Andrey Denisov, op.cit., pp. 026-027: it appears that Feodosy had requested that monks who came to the Old Faith should become simple novices (bel'tsy). This Gavriil Evtikhinov had renounced the Nikonian tonsure, and had taken new monastic vows by his own initiative. Feodosy Vasil'ev believed that Gavriil had no right to do so, and wanted him to live like a simple novice. Andrey Denisov, instead, was in favour of allowing individuals to take monastic vows, for fear of otherwise repeating the mistake of the iconoclasts and the enemies of monasticism; in other words the tendency at Vyg was to allow monasticism to survive as the fruit of an individual choice, in spite of the fact that the Vyg community as such was not a monastery. See also P.S.Smirnov, op.cit., pp. 294-297.

73 P.S.Smirnov, op.cit., p.285.

of purification for the benefit of women after childbirth. Such condescension could not but be regarded as a sign of weakness and lead to confusion (74). This conciliatory letter from Andrey Denisov did not lead to the expected results, because Feodosy became annoyed on learning that, in spite of the verbal recognition of the four-letter inscription on the cross, the latter had not yet been introduced in Vyg. Feodosy was also displeased by Andrey's accusation that he allowed starozheny to have children (75). Misunderstandings and disagreements continued until the fateful journey of Feodosy to Vyg in 1706. This was undertaken after the encounter and discussions in Novgorod between a Vyg teacher, Leonty Feodos'evich and some wardens of the Polish community. It had degenerated into a bitter quarrel, and consequently an open and reciprocal hostility between Andrey and Feodosy surfaced, one which they had previously tried to conceal in their correspondence by mutual appeals to peace and cooperation (76). The inscription on the cross caused the most passionate disagreement. Feodosy was hoping by his trip to Vyg to sort out the differences and to reach a common agreement. He took with him six coreligionists, among them his brother Leonty, who decided later to remain with the Vyg community, thus becoming a Pomoryan (77). Feodosy and his companions were met in friendly fashion by the Vyg community but they did not find the Denisov brothers, who

74 Andrey Denisov, Poslanie v Pol'shu, p. 024.

75 P.D. Justinov, 'Feodosevshchina', pp. 401-402.

76 P.D. Justinov, op.cit., pp. 406-407.

77 P.D. Justinov, op.cit., p. 408.

were away on a journey undertaken for some communal necessity. Therefore their opponent in the discussion was a certain Leonty Popov Tolvitsky with whom a disagreement had already taken place in Novgorod. Together they examined various questions. Feodosy insisted on the canonicity of the four-letter inscription and wanted the Pomoryans to worship it. The debate became more and more heated and noisy; Leonty became extremely angry and banged the table with his fists, crying out three times, with increasing fury, that he had no need for any Jesus Nazarene in the inscription. Feodosy was left speechless. The peaceful examination of the Scriptures gave way to mutual accusations of heresy and even worse insults which the author of Feodosy's life has preferred not to hand down to posterity (78). Feodosy came to the conclusion that there was no hope of obtaining from the Pomoryans recognition of the four-letter inscription on the cross and that therefore there could be no possibility of communion between the two groups. Therefore saying prayers, eating and drinking in common must be given up. He did not leave in a serene state of mind; on leaving, he shook the dust of Vyg off his feet, to express his will to break all communion. He was about to embark on a long journey to Poland but he refused the provisions which the Vyg fathers had prepared for him. He could not accept such offers from those who had refused to listen to his preaching (79). On his return to Vyg, Andrey Denisov was very upset by the news (80). He made a final attempt at

78 Ibid., pp.408-410 and Evstraty Feodoseevich, Zhitie p. 83.

79 P.D.Justinov, op.cit., p. 411.

80 P.S.Smirnov, op.cit., p. 255.

reconciliation by visiting Feodosy in Novgorod, after the community had left Poland. Apparently, they managed to have a friendly conversation in which they found some sort of agreement, even to share their prayers to God. But this was nothing more than a personal rapprochement; the two communities remained separate and hostile (81). In 1710, Andrey Denisov wrote a circular letter in which he fully expounded the Vyg position. In article 2 of this letter, he examined the question of marriage, restated his beliefs and dismissed the justification Feodosy had given of his practice, saying that it was no use to make reference to St. Paul, for the Apostle was contemplating only one specific case, namely the one when a member of a couple is christened while the other is not. Paul, Andrey stressed, was not considering the case of both partners in a couple being Christians (82). In 1712, the Vyg fathers judged that marriage between Christians and people of other faiths were to be condemned, because the resulting union would have no stability. But then, in any case, marriages as such were deemed illegitimate (83).

Pavel Onufrevich Lyubopytnyi (1772-1848), a Pomoryan Old Believer who devoted many of his writings to a defense of marriage and whose writings have contributed significantly to an understanding of the question, tells a different story in his account on the

81 P.D. Justinov, op.cit., p. 414.

82 P.S. Smirnov, op.cit., pp. 254-256; Andrey Denisov, O Feodoseevtsekh, pp. 040-043.

83 P.S. Smirnov, op.cit., pp. 256-257.

basis of documents now lost (84). Andrey Denisov would have been influenced towards a more "enlightened" view of marriage, which would ultimately have resulted in his acceptance of marriage. In his Kratkoe Skazanie (Brief narration), Lyubopytny attributes Denisov's original rejection of marriage to the ignorance of the times. Lyubopytny rightly sees in the exchange between Andrey and Feodosy the beginning of the dispute about marriage, but he dismisses these discussions because "being without the illumination of philosophy, they let themselves be guided by dead literalism" (85). Because of their attachment to the letter, argues Lyubopytny, they were unable to solve their doubts, so that they "always nourished in themselves an irreconcilable hostility and contempt the one towards the other" (86). In Lyubopytny's account, Feodosy Vasil'ev was upset to a degree by Andrey Denisov's criticism, but defended his case with the enlightenment he derived from the Scriptures, "the example of Christian history and the light of natural reason" (87). Thanks to Feodosy, a process of thought was started by "the genius of Andrey, attentively directing his consideration to all the various truths contained in that whip, i.e., Feodosy's defence was struck in its weakness ... as by a fire-weapon ... From that time the Father Superior, in spite of the fact that in his system was striving towards heroism, had in his heart already

84 On Lyubopytny, see Chapter 4.

85 P.O.Lyubopytny, Kratkoe skazanie, f.108v.

86 Loc.cit.

87 Ibid., f. 109.

been marked by Truth and was dwelling in the Light of the Gospel" (88). Lyubopytny thus attributes to Feodosy's criticism a crucial role in inducing Andrey Denisov to abandon the initial extreme rigorism of the Old Believers in order to try to come to terms with the necessities of this world. Lyubopytny also claims that Andrey, influenced by Feodosy would have relaxed the strict rules against the sacrament of marriage. According to Lyubopytny, a Pomoryan, Mikhail Vishatin (1667-1732) succeeded, in long and far reaching discussions, in convincing Andrey Denisov of the "eternity of married life" (89). Mikhail Ivanovich Vishatin was attached to the Berezovskii skit (hermitage) of Vyg. He was very highly thought of by Lyubopytny, who described him as "cultivated, of excellent talent, knowledgeable in Latin and Greek, an exemplary and enthusiastic supporter of piety, of solid and heroic spirit, and severe life" (90).

Above all Lyubopytny approved of him because "More than once he solemnly defeated the pernicious marriage breakers [brakobortsy] when they were beginning to spread their theories there, more than once he surprised the council of the Vyg elders with his speech and healed them from their marriage-breaking delusions" (91). As we have seen, at the root of the prohibition of marriage among the Old Believers there was the absence of a priesthood of Orthodox ordination. Mikhail Ivanovich Vishatin decided to try and find an Orthodox bishop outside of Russia, who

88 Ibid., f.109 v.

89 Ibid., f.110.

90 Ibid., See also P.O.Lyubopytny, O brake, f.9v.

91 P.O.Lyubopytny, Istoricheskiy slovar', p. 139.

would ordain priests according to the Old Faith. If he had succeeded, the split between priestly and priestless Old Believers could have been healed, and marriage restored. But he did not go far: in 1732 he died in an Old Believer monastery, in Galicia, in the town of Kutý, at the Polish-Moravian frontier where he had gone to try to find the uncorrupted source of Christian ordination. Death put an end to his search for an orthodox Bishop (92). It was after discussions with Vishatin that Andrey Denisov, according to Lyubopytny took measures to enable married couples to attend the liturgies (93). However, even in Lyubopytny's account which is slanted towards presenting Andrey as closer to the narrator's views than he probably was, these measures did not go beyond allowing attendance at religious services; they did not contemplate the participation of married people at worship and prayers. Lyubopytny observes in fact that this arrangement of Andrey's still left in doubt and in "unenlightened darkness" the matter of the legitimacy of

92 P.I.Mel'nikov (Andrey Pechersky), Istoricheskie ocherki popovshchini, pp.70-72. According to Lyubopytny, (op.cit., pp.139-140) Vishatin died in Palestine. Only in 1846 did the Old Believers succeed in obtaining a Bishop, in the person of Amvrosy, and founding the "Belokrinit'skaya staroobryadcheskaya Mitropoliya", in Austrian Bucovina. But the priestless Old Believers did not recognise it, so that the hoped for reunion was not achieved. See also T.Verkhovsky, Iskanie Staroobryadtsev; Mironov, Osnovanie Belokrinit'skoy ierarkhii; K.Popov, Arkhiv raskolnicheskogo arkiereya Amvroziya, N.Yu. Bubnov - I.F.Martynov, 'K istorii biblioteki Belokrinit'skoy staroobryadcheskoy mitropolii'.

93 Lyubopytny, Kratkoe skazanie, f.110. These measures were the following: "the institution of decorous areas fenced off from the rest of the church by a thin separation; and above these sanctuaries spacious openings by means of which it was possible to listen to the word of God and edify one's heart with moral teaching".

marriage. Denisov, writes Lyubopytny, realized this and in consideration of the "coarseness of the populace" decided to explain and sanction by his own example the meaning of his measures. He would have done so by honouring some Moscow Old Believers with his presence during his visit there in 1717. These Old Believers, whose hospitality Andrey accepted were a certain Anton Ivanov and Semen Artemev, two priestless Old Believers who had entered into marital relationships after their rebaptism in the Old Faith. It can be guessed that Andrey found this acceptable as his hosts had not become members of a monastic community but had remained in the world to live after its fashion (94). According to Lyubopytny, Andrey's respect for married Old Believers went so far as to share with them what could be shared only with fully Orthodox Christians: prayers and meals (95). Lyubopytny regrets the fact that "some ignorant people have neglected to pay due attention to this fact" (96). Still, according to Lyubopytny, Andrey, realising what the "climate of opinion of his church" was, decided to "reveal and make more secure this sacrament as a positive dogma in considerations expressed in the privacy of his cell". This probably occurred in 1719. From this contention of Lyubopytny's it is to be inferred that, presumably in 1719, Andrey Denisov quietly expressed to a few fellow Old Believers close to him the view that married

94 Lyubopytny, O brake, ff.9v, 12v; Kratkoe skazanie, f.110v. Smirnov (Spory i razdeleniya, p.260) agrees that Denisov made a clear distinction between the way of life of the monastic communities (skity) and the way of life of the laity.

95 Lyubopytny, Kratkoe skazanie, f.110v and O brake f.10: "like with true and pure Christians".

96 Lyubopytny, Kratkoe skazanie, f.110v.

people ought to be treated with a certain degree of tolerance. Lyubopytny regrets that "rough superstition" failed to take into consideration this "extraordinary manifestation of our Father Superior" and continued "mercilessly to enthrall and lead astray simplicity of soul into its nets of perdition" (97). In other words, Andrey's latest, more tolerant views on the subject of marriage were not unanimously accepted at Vyg. Lyubopytny maintains that Andrey did not give up, and "inflicted a deadly wound to ignorance" in the course of a council which he convoked in 1720 (98). At this council, which is only known about from Lyubopytny, it was decided that there was only one substance in marriage, namely the vows of the spouses, and that marriage was holy even without "sacerdotal crowning" (venchanie), and as such would remain in the church for ever. As the combination of body and soul into one single unity constitutes the perfection of man, so the combination of virginity and marriage constitutes the perfection of the church (99). Lyubopytny adds that it was resolved in council that whoever should have transgressed the resolutions of this council was to be brought to reason, punished if necessary, and if unrepentant, excommunicated from the communion of the church. This last point alone seems to raise doubts as to the legitimacy of the resolutions of this council. In Vyg, unanimity was a condition for the validity of any resolution; majority was not enough. Lyubopytny's evidence alone,

97 Ibid., f.111.

98 Loc.cit.

99 Lyubopytny, O brake, f.10v.

motivated as it is by interest, is very thin indeed. He tried to make his assertion more credible by claiming that the resolution of the 1720 council, which were so favourable to marriage, were destroyed by "fierce flames" in 1757. Lyubopytny's deeply regretted this as "in the present dark Time during which superstition possesses the populace the resolutions of this council could perhaps serve as a luminary of Truth and with a sword as sharp as the one of Alexander of Macedon sever the contorted knot of the marriage-breakers' dogmatism, which exhibits the superstitious mask of its virginity, and the arrogance of vile pharisees which is trampled upon by the wise" (100). Lyubopytny also quoted the witness of some "pious and excellent people" to the effect that it was "likely" that Andrey "lying on his death bed in the last moment of his life, in front of all who were standing around him, confirmed his views favourable to marriage" (101).

Lyubopytny's contention needs explanation. The veracity of his account of a council which would have resulted in the legitimization of marriage may well be doubted. It seems strange that no other evidence, even indirect, should have survived of its decisions apart from what Lyubopytny himself writes, and it was in his interest to reinforce his position adducing support of the authority of Andrey Denisov. On the other hand, as will be mentioned later, a council was held in 1725, which severely

100 Lyubopytny, Kratkoe skazanie, f.111v.

101 Lyubopytny, O brake, f.11.

condemned marriages inside the main community but made allowances for marriages in some outside communities. Even according to Lyubopytny's contention there was no claim that marriage had been permitted inside the walls of the community. All that Lyubopytny tried to prove was that Andrey Denisov, in the end, decided to withdraw his condemnation of marriage for Old Believers who lived outside Vyg. As Lyubopytny knew very well there was a different set of rules for the members of the community and for outsiders. This distinction was obviously taken for granted, so that there was no need among Old Believers to mention it, let alone insist upon it. To accept Lyubopytny's evidence only amounts to antedating the decision to tolerate marriages in the outside communities from 1725 to 1719, and put the weight of Andrey Denisov's authority behind it.

As Feĉdotov wrote, "monastic religion in all its currents attracted the laymen also, drawing them into the circle of its influence. Byzantium never knew the dualism of monastic and lay ethics, but considered the Christian ideal embodied only in a perfect monk. For them monasticism was merely a correct and uncompromising interpretation of the Gospel" (102). No wonder therefore that the monastic ideal should be so intensely felt in the Vyg community and among the Old Believers at large. Of course one of the most important rules concerns the prescription of chastity. But before continuing the discussion of the prohibition of marriage, it must be stressed that Andrey Denisov was well aware of how arduous and painful such a prohibition

102 G.P.Fedotov, The Russian religious mind, p. 393.

would be for ordinary human beings.

"The sacrament of marriage was from the beginning established by God for the increase of human kind and for the preservation of chastity. Now no one can perform the ceremony and no one can unite with another through the sacrament of marriage according to law. All peoples of the whole world and all animals can do so; beasts and birds and reptiles have young, but because we have been deprived of the Holy Office we cannot and are forbidden to do so: but from desire no man is free. Such a situation has never occurred since the Creation, and no one can describe how much the people of Christ suffer from the inner yearning of their flesh because of this lack, and how many different spiritual sores they bear" (103).

The picture which emerges from what has been considered until now is one of great indecision and uncertainty. The case for monasticism was indeed strong: the priestless Old Believers were led in that direction by the combined pressure of an ideal of Byzantine origin which saw in monasticism the truest embodiment of Christian perfection; by the loss of a secular *celesty* after the schism, as a result of which monasticism remained the viable option; and by the anxiety in the face of a world ruled by Antichrist - an anxiety which induced Christians to seek salvation in monastic communities far away from the institutions of power (104). In actual fact most Old Believers failed to live up to this ideal. It should also be pointed out that Vyg never became a monastery in the full sense of the word. In this

103 Quoted by R.O.Crummey, op.cit., p. 117.

104 Arkhimandrit Pallady, Obozrenie permskogo raskola, pp. 141-142.

respect the observations of the Soviet historian Kuandykov are worthy of notice; he rightly stresses that the Vyg fathers were never tonsured, and therefore, technically speaking, they were not monks (105). They rather constituted a community of laymen who individually chose to recreate the tradition of Solovki and to live up to a monastic ideal. The monastic organization also provided a blueprint of a social and economic structure; "for the priestless Old Believers who were trying to organise their own self government in respect of the basic dogmas of their religion, the monastic community was the best, not to say the only, form of organization for large communities" (106). But the Vyg fathers, keen as they were to call things by their name, abstained from defining their community a monastery. They usually preferred to use such words as bratstvo (fraternity), obshchezhitel'stvo (community) and kinoviya (communal life). Kuandykov observes that "in the Vyg tradition it was probably a subterfuge not to define as a 'monastery' what strictly speaking was not a monastery, while at the same time underlining the monastic structure of the

105 L.K.Kuandykov ('Razvitie obshchezhitel'nogo ustava', p.53). observes that of the founders of Vyg only one, the Solovki ieromonakh Pafnuty, was properly tonsured. But this Pafnuty did not in his turn tonsure any member of the Vyg community, not even Daniil Vikulin, Petr Prokop'ev or Andrey and Semen Denisov who all died laymen. R.O.Crummey is misleading when, e.g. at p.103, states that Andrey Denisov envisaged Vyg as a monastery: in the text he refers to, the Slovo Nadgrobnoe of Andrey Denisov, the latter is actually defined "gospodin kinoviarkh Andrey Denisov": he does not have a monastic name, and no monk would call himself gospodin. M.L.Sokolovskaya has recently argued that Vyg can be considered a monastery, because instead of a canonical definition of 'monastery', she accepts a socio-economic one: see her 'O kharaktere upravlenii'.

106 L.K.Kuandykov, op.cit., p. 51.

Vyg community" (107). But if this was the case, it was inevitable that the Vyg fathers should in the end have felt insecure about imposing monastic rules on everyone (108). In the 1720s it was eventually admitted that one of the fundamental monastic vows, chastity, no longer bound all communities and all priestless Old Believers.

On 3 January 1725 a council met at Vyg to regulate the relationship between the main community at Vyg, which as we have seen was organised on monastic lines, and the Christians who lived in the world but recognized in the Vyg fathers their spiritual guides and religious authority. When married, these Christians would be called novozheny. The articles agreed at the council of 1725 stated that

- "1. The novozheny were to live in separate skity.
2. The Orthodox Christians of the pustynnoe soglasie (i.e., those who had chosen a monastic way of life) were not supposed to dwell in those skity.
3. In order to avoid the spreading and increase of scandalous situations, the novozheny who lived under the supervision of a given skit were

107 Ibid., p. 54, Kuandykov underlines the pragmatic character of the Vyg statutes, which differentiates them from other more traditional types of monastic statutes.

108 Kuandykov (op.cit., p. 59) explains the change in the way of life at Vyg with the economic recovery of the 1720s, which made the other communities less dependent on Vyg for survival. This can be regarded as a controversial point: e.g., the Moscow community of Old Believers, which shall be dealt with in Chapter 4, tried to establish a monastic discipline in a rather different economic context. But Kuandykov's views concerning periodization are interesting, also when he challenges the views of A.I. Klibanov who in his Narodnaya sotsial'naya utopiya, pp.174-192, failed to notice how the structure of these communities changed in later times from what it was in earlier periods.

- supposed not to accept novozheny who belonged to skity where the scandalous doctrine (i.e., the permission of marriage) had not been accepted.
4. The children of the novozheny could not be baptized" (109).

From these rules of 1725 it is clear how uncertain the Vyg fathers were about the prohibition of marriage. It seems that they were far from reaching unanimous agreement, and that while some communities were beginning to accept openly that not all Old Believers could reasonably be expected to live in chastity, other skity were still intransigent on this matter. It must be stressed that in these articles too, the Vyg fathers refrain from defining their community as a monastery. They use instead the rather imprecise concept of pustynnoe soglasie. Perhaps the ambiguity of the situation is best exemplified by the following episode: when Semen Denisov was arrested in 1714 in Novgorod, his cell-mate was a Pomoryan Old Believer, a certain Andrey Vasil'ev Koshechkin, whose wife was not an Old Believer, and who had two daughters (110). As it was acknowledged in the 1725 rules, the different skity were variously organised also as regards marriage. Recent research by the Soviet historian M.L. Sokolovskaya, based largely on the materials of the first, second and third censuses analyses the relationship between the Vyg community and the skity depending on it, which were scattered in

109 Prigovor o novozhenakh. See also Kniga otecheskoe zaveshchanie, ff. 26-29v, on the exclusion of married people from some of the skity.

110 See ODDS, vol VIII (1728), St.Petersburg, 1881, pp. 258-261, n.262/437, 23 April/7 August 1728. Semen Denisov during his imprisonment wrote three petitions to the Novgorod Metropolitan Iov (Druzhinin, nn. 92-94). He escaped from prison by bribing one of the guards. See R.O.Crummey, op.cit., pp. 77-78.

the vast territories administered by Vyg. Sokolovskaya points out that in the region monasteries had a prominent economic function, as well as the more customary one of caring for Christian achievements. They were in the first place organizers of peasant communities, and only secondarily monasteries in the strictly religious sense of the word (111).

The Vyg community was in charge of both black and white lands. The white lands paid no taxes, were the full property of the community, and were cultivated by its members (112). The black lands were the property of the state that charged Vyg with their administration. As stated in the relevant documents, these lands were "pod vedomstvom Vygoreskogo raskol'nicheskogo obshchezhitel'stva" (113). In the black lands the population was organized in skity. The skity were settlements grouping fifteen, thirty or more izbas, and their relationship to the council of the Vyg fathers was modelled on that of the monastic podvor'e, i.e., they were centres from which Vyg controlled and administered the black lands of which it was the administrator (114). The Vyg elders would visit the skity and carry out their administrative obligations: solve territorial and other disputes; issue passports for seasonal work; and choose the conscripts for military service. The skity had a communal internal administration, and Vyg was juridically and economically

111 M.L.Sokolovskaya, op.cit., p.157-167. Sokolovskaya in her research confirms what D.Ostrovsky had argued in his Vygovskaya pustyn', pp. 38-40.

112 M.L.Sokolovskaya, 'O kharaktere upravleniya', p. 61.

113 M.L.Sokolovskaya, op.cit., p. 62.

114 M.L.Sokolovskaya, 'Severnoe raskol'nich'e ...', 1978, p. 160. See also L.K.Kuandykov, 'Ideologiya obshchezhitel'stva'.

responsible for them to the state (115). In the skity the inhabitants followed a secular way of life: there were families, and all censuses indicate family groups, identifying the degrees of kinship. The typical family inside the skit was of a patriarchal kind, and would include up to three generations (116). Unfortunately the question is not yet documented enough to enable one to draw a final conclusion from these facts. It would be unwarranted to argue that the presence of families in the skity was by itself proof of any acceptance on the part of the Vyg Old Believers of family life; conversely Vyg's juridical and economic responsibility to the state does not of itself indicate that the inhabitants of the skity accepted Vyg's moral and religious authority. Yet it can be tentatively argued that as apparently the region was densely populated with Old Believers, it is likely that they would look to Vyg as a source of spiritual guidance. It can also be assumed that Vyg accepted the way of life of the skity. For instance Ivan Filippov, the historian of the Vyg community, does not seem to be in any way censorious of the secular life of the skity, and of the presence of families. He writes that while the members of the Vyg community lived "the most essential and deprived life of an hermitage", in the skity an "ordinary, worldly life" was the rule (117). A life of chastity led by a laymen was so unusual, that Filippov marks out

115 M.L.Sokolovskaya, op.cit., p. 160. For a list of the skity, see D.Ostrovsky, op.cit., p. 72.

116 M.L.Sokolovskaya, op.cit., pp. 161-164.

117 Ivan Filippov, Istoriya Vygovskoy staroobryadcheskoy pustyni, p. 105. See also D.Ostrovsky, op.cit., p. 38, and M.L. Sokolovskaya, 'O kharaktere', p. 71, about the acceptance of novozheny.

the few commendable cases when this happened. He mentions for instance a certain Ermolay Amosov who, in spite of being a laymen who lived in the world, "lived chastely without a wife, always taking the utmost care to preserve his piety". This Amosov eventually joined the monastery where he died in 1732 (118). Filippov also mentions a married couple who moved to the Vyg region and separated only after they had both decided to enter the monastic community. The husband, Ivan Kirillov, was granted by God "the gift of tears" with such generosity, that he had to use a handkerchief to shield the Holy Books from the flow of his tears. The wife of a St.Petersburg Pomoryan is mentioned by Filippov without the least comment or embarrassment (119). It seems therefore that, while celibacy was preached as the ideal even for the skity, in actual fact marital unions were tolerated (120).

In the light of what has been written here concerning the relationship of the Vyg community to the skity, it seems to me that Crummey's comments are not totally justified. The American historian of the Vyg community writes that "Andreï Denisov and

118 Ivan Filippov, op.cit., p. 297.

119 Ivan Filippov, op.cit., pp. 326-328;339.

120 See the observations of D.Ostrovsky, op.cit., p. 72. Illuminating in this respect is a document published in ODDS, vol. VI (1726), St. Petersburg, 1883, pp. 388-397, n.224/164, 24 August/18 January 1727, which shows the elders of Vyg in action as judges in the skity, and the denunciation of some elders of the skity (not of lay inhabitants) for not living in chastity. See also the deposition to the Synod of the Old Believer Ivan Kruglov, pp. 494-502, ODDS, vol. XVIII (1738), Petrograd, 1915, 333/480, 10 July 1739, from which it results that in some skity there were novozheny, while in others Old Believers simply cohabitated.

his colleagues seem to have believed that sexual relations of any kind were intrinsically evil and consequently that a Christian could achieve his full potential as a witness to the faith only if he remained chaste" (121). The latter part of this statement is certainly accurate, as not only the Vyg fathers, but all Christians with the exception of Protestants have traditionally regarded chastity as a way of life allowing for a higher degree of spirituality and a closer contemplation of things divine. As for the allegation that there was hostility to sexuality as such, this seems to me a question mal posée. It cannot be denied that Andrey Denisov exhorted his disciples "to lead a pure and chaste life, avoid lechery and keep away from the foulness of the flesh" (122). But as we in fact know thanks also to Crummey's research, Andrey Denisov was deeply and humanly sympathetic to the hardship and the plight caused by a life of abstinence and regretted that Christians had to do without a joy which was not denied even to animals. The case must therefore have been different; it was not that Andrey Denisov was hostile to marriage and sexual relations as such, but simply that he did not see any possible way by which marriages could remain the holy sacrament envisaged by the Christian church. As a true Christian and a man who felt a deep moral obligation to be coherent in his own ideas, and sacrifice to them, if need be, his most immediate inclinations, he believed that Christians should strive to comply with the rules of the Church of which they were members. He did not believe that

121 R.O.Crummey, op.cit., p. 120.

122 Ivan Filippov, op.cit., p. 212.

celibacy had always been the only path to Christian perfection, only, it seemed to him that, of the two paths to salvation, namely celibacy and marriage, only one had remained after the schism. To contrast Denisov's rigidity with Avvakum's humanity, as Crummey does, is misleading. Avvakum defended a marriage attacked by other Old Believers, but we do not know how that marriage had been celebrated. As for Avvakum having been a "devoted husband and father of a large family", that is also irrelevant because Avvakum's marriage to Anastasiya Markovna had been celebrated before the schism in full respect of the rules of the church (123). It seems only reasonable that Andrey Denisov and the Vyg fathers should have made sure that no sexual contacts took place inside the community; the ideal followed there was monastic, and the Vyg fathers were there to set an example to others. In conclusion, it must be pointed out that the leader of the community had to face a double set of problems: on the one hand he had to make sure that chastity was observed inside the community in respect of the monastic ideal and because of the absence of the sacrament of marriage, which made any union between men and women sinful; on the other hand, he had to try to induce the inhabitants of the skity who led a lay life to pursue the ideal of Christian perfection and abstain from married life because in the Last Days of Antichrist's rule marriage no longer existed as a sacrament.

123 See Chapter 1, and R.O.Crummey, *op.cit.*, pp. 120-1.

While Vyg was moving towards a greater toleration of marriage, the Theodosians were heading in the opposite direction. After the disbandment of the Ryapina community in 1719, many Theodosians fled to Poland; Evstraty, the son of Feodosy Vasil'ev, was among them (124). Once again the Polish community became the most prominent group among the Theodosians. Its exact location has not been identified, though there seems to be some evidence that it was in the guberniya of Vitebsk (125). In that period the most prominent Theodosian was Ignaty Trofimov (1660-1745) who went twice to Vyg, a first time in 1727 and a second time in 1731-32, in order to promote pacification among the two communities, still at odds with each other on the question of the inscription on the cross (126). Ignaty Trofimov's efforts came to nothing because in 1739 Vyg had yielded to the pressure of a government commission and had accepted the obligation to pray for the Imperial family. As a result, Vyg lost some of its authority among the Theodosians (127). In the same year, Ignaty Trofimov refused the request of the Pomoryan Spiridon Ivanovich who wanted to settle in a Theodosian community, in Poland. Ignaty told him this was not possible because there still existed many points of disagreement between Vyg and the Theodosians (128). On 31 October 1751, the Theodosians held a council in Gudziskach, in Poland, at which they drafted a series of resolutions in forty six

124 P. Justinov, 'K istorii feodoseevskago tolka', pp.140,484; Evstraty Feodoseevich, Zhitie, p.92.

125 P. Justinov, op.cit., pp.692-694n.

126 Ibid., pp.136n.

127 Ibid., p.690. On the commission known as "Samarin", see R.O.Crummey, op.cit., pp.174-179.

128 Ibid., pp.688-689.

articles (129). Of these only those which touch upon the question of marriage will be discussed here. The novozheny were the main target; it was confirmed that they would be excluded from the sacrament of confession by their spiritual father unless they repented of what they had done and agreed to a separation (Art.24). Their children could not be admitted to the sacrament of baptism unless their parents first parted from each other (Art.27). A spiritual father who bypassed this rule would be demoted from his position and excommunicated (Art.29) (130). Some exception must have been made for very sick children: there seems to be no other explanation for Art.30 which states that healthy children of novozheny cannot be baptized either by a spiritual father or by laymen - an indication perhaps that normally the children of the novozheny would be baptized by laymen. The novozheny could not share in the life of the other Theodosians: neither cohabitation nor community of any kind were allowed (Art.31). An exception was made for novozheny who were old and ill and had nowhere to go; they could be given a roof, but their hosts had to make sure that they kept separate plates and cutlery and took their meals apart from the rest of the household (Art.32). Theodosian elders were not allowed to go into the houses of the impure novozheny to glorify Christ and

129 Ustav pol'skii. See E.Iwaniec, Z dziejow staroobzedowcow, p.161.

130 A.I.Zhuralev's evidence (Polnoe istoricheskoe izvestie, pp.154-155) is of interest, as he himself was a Theodosian before joining the Orthodox church. He lived in the house of some novozheny, and saw that this rule was strictly observed. Once a child was born, since all Theodosian elders refused to baptize it, the parents had to call for a Pomoryan father.

recite prayers (Art.34). Children of novozheny were treated with less severity; they could be admitted into the company of Christians, i.e., of Theodosians who lived with respect of the rules, but they could not share the same roof and had to be excluded from the preparation and consumption of food (Art.33). Novozheny who would repent and agree to part from each other were sent to different villages and received a penance for their sins (Art.42). As for the starozheny, the old bone of contention, between Andrey Denisov and Feodosy Vasil'ev, their marriages were considered legitimate for the purposes of cohabitation, but ineffectual for what concerned childbearing; for that they would be punished (Art.45). The concessions enjoyed by the starozheny did not apply to those Russians who, being in Poland, had their marriages celebrated in Polish Catholic churches. Their marriages had even less pretensions to legitimacy and they could not be admitted to baptism in the Old Faith unless they agreed to dissolve their marriage (Art.35). Similarly, couples who lived together outside of marriage of any kind, had to agree to part (Art.36). The rule was particularly strict for novozheny who fell ill: they could not be admitted to confession unless they parted from their spouses, the rituals of burial could not be celebrated in their home, and their spouses would not be admitted unless he/she repented (Art.46).

Summing up, the first half of the eighteenth century saw further developments among the priestless Old Believers and their attitude to marriage. A split occurred between Theodosian and Pomoryan priestless Old Believers on the question of the

inscription on the cross. Besides there also occurred a disagreement on the question of marriage; initially Andrey Denisov took a more uncompromising stance of condemnation of any form of marriage, while Feodosy Vasil'ev recognized marriages concluded before conversion to the Old Faith.

Later, the Vyg Pomoryans came to tolerate marriage in some of the communities attached to Vyg, and in 1725 openly recognized the existence of married couples in some of these communities. After the failure of the attempt at reconciliation between the Theodosians and the Pomoryans, carried out in 1727 and in 1731-32 by the Theodosian Ignaty Trofimov, the Theodosians moved to an ever more uncompromising rejection of marriage, a development which culminated in the resolutions of the Polish council of 1751.

The ground was ready for a wider debate of the question of marriage. In the next chapters, attention will be paid to the most original thinkers on the subject, and to the developments among the priestless Old Believers.

Chapter 3

Ivan Alekseev (1709-1776)

The ideal of the priestless Old Believers, as we have seen in the previous chapters, was a monastic one, with all the ensuing implications. But it was a controversial ideal, which the priestless Old Believers accepted sometimes grudgingly. The first meaningful criticism of it was voiced by Ivan Alekseev (1709-1776). Ivan Alekseev, called "Starodubsky" from the place where he lived, was born somewhere in Great Russia in 1709. While still very young, he moved to Starodub, in the Klimova sloboda of Chernigov guberniya, where he was a state peasant (1). His literary skills earned him distinction and fame, and he succeeded in them in spite of the little free time he had. Once an Old Believer, perhaps an elder who on account of his age was not required to do manual work, asked him in 1756 to give his support in a religious dispute. Alekseev answered: "You lead a free life, unbound by things of this world, you have the possibility of reading and studying whatever book you wish to read, and make sense out of it... While our life is tied up by worldly preoccupations, torn to pieces by a multitude of cares, constantly worried by things of this world, we have to provide every day by our labour for the food and clothing of ourselves and those who live with us; we do not have enough time for other things, so that bound by need we cannot devote ourselves to our inclinations and our mind becomes covered by heavy darkness"(2).

1 P.S.Smirnov, 'Sochineniya bezpopovtza Ivana Alekseeva', p.489. See also entry Alekseev, Ivan, RBS, vol. II, 1900, pp. 3-5.

2 Smirnov, op.cit., pp.491-493. The question Alekseev had been asked to resolve, in 1756, concerned the Eucharist. See below.

As it can be surmised from this episode, Alekseev had the reputation of being the most learned Old Believer of his day. Yakov Stepanovich Belyaev, the chronicler of the priestly Old Believer church of Vetka, also had a high opinion of him; writing in 1780, he stated that "before our time among the people of our sect who were keen on science and learning, the first was Ivan Alekseev, a priestless Old Believer; there has remained to us afterwards a rhetoric of his composition, which also contains an homily on Vetka". Belyaev also informs us that Alekseev taught himself rhetoric and dialectics from two texts of the Likhud brothers, from which he took notes, and on the basis of which he composed a grammar (3). In Klimov there was another Old Believer, called Mikhail Grigorich, who was at the time a companion of Alekseev's studies. This self-tuition in grammar, rhetoric and dialectics earned Alekseev general respect and recognition in Starodub, both among the priestless and among the priestly Old Believers, in spite of the treatises composed by Alekseev against them (4). Alekseev is also remembered as a singer of

3 M.I.Lileev, Iz istorii raskola, p.348. Yakov Stepanovich Belyaev was a priestly Old Believer. For his works see V.G. Druzhinin, Pisaniya, pp.68-69. M.I.Lileev (loc.cit.), informs us that Belyaev also possessed a 'Raymundulullova Kniga', i.e., a book of philosophy by Raymond Lull (c.1223-c.1315). It could have been the Ars Magna, which was translated in Russian by Andrey Belobotsky, (see A.Kh.Gorfunkel, 'Andrey Belobotsky') or an abbreviated edition of it which was in fact composed by Andrey Denisov: see Nikanor, 'Velikaya nauka'. The texts of Lull were also used by the Likhud brothers. On these, and on Lull, see also M. Smentsovsky, Brat'ya Likhudy; I.Nikolaev, Materialy dlya biografii Likhudov; M.V.Bezobrazova, 'O Velikoy nauke'; A.N.Sokolov, 'Filosofiya Raymunda Lyulla'; V.Druzhinin 'K voprosu ob avtore'; V.P.Zoubov, 'Quelques notices, and by the same author, 'K istorii russkogo oratorskogo iskusstva'; A.Kh.Gorfunkel, 'Velikaya nauka.'

4 M.I. Lileev, op.cit., p.348-350.

rare quality, a talented icon-painter and a skilled scribe in uncial letters, the products of whose talents could be found in many Old Believer communities, among them those of Moscow and Starodub (5). Both the Pomoryan and Theodosyan Old Believers claimed Alekseev as one of them, yet Alekseev leaves one with the impression of having belonged specifically to neither of these two branches. It is possible that he did not attach excessive importance to the question of the inscription on the cross which had been the final cause of the split between Theodosians and Pomoryans. That it may well have been so seems to be corroborated by his apparent silence on the question, unless, of course, such writings have failed to come to light. Alekseev, it seems, regarded himself first and foremost as a member of that invisible Christian church which continued the pursuit of Christian ideals and the Christian mission in the period between the extinction of the Apostolic succession, of the visible Church, and of Christ's second coming. His main activity consisted in fact of a general apologia for the priestless Old Believers vis-à-vis the priestly Old Believers, and of the defence of the novozheny whose practice it was to have marriages celebrated by Nikonian priests who would agree to celebrate them in the old *rite*. Therefore the issues that concerned him cut across the division which had finally arisen on the question of the inscription on the cross. Significantly, I.F. Nil'sky, the first historian of the debate on marriage, who described Alekseev as a Theodosian, also mentions

5 P.O. Lyubopytny, Istoricheskiy slovar', p.112.

that he had sympathizers among the Pomoryans (6). Probably aware of the difficulty of pinning Alekseev down, P.S.Smirnov writes that, at least in the last period of his life, Alekseev belonged to the sect of the novozheny of which he was the founder. Smirnov's allegation seems disputable, as there was not such a sect with a separate identity : the novozheny, namely Old Believers who had married after their conversion to the old faith, were to be found within both Pomoryans and Theodosians (7). Two works of denunciation he wrote against Theodosian elders are not of themselves sufficient evidence to classify him as a Pomoryan, but coupled with the apparent absence of any such writings against Pomoryan elders, could be regarded as an indication of a Pomoryan rather than a Theodosian allegiance (8).

In the course of his life, Alekseev visited many Old Believer communities (9). In 1728 he was in Vyg, where he had lengthy discussions with Andrey Denisov. These resulted in Alekseev proposing twenty four questions on various matters to the

6 I.Nil'sky, Semeynaya zhizn', pp.105,175-181. Others who define Alekseev as a Theodosian are Petr Bogdanovich, Istoricheskoe izvestie, p.43; A.K. Borozdin, Ocherki, pp.98-103.

7 P.S.Smirnov, op.cit., p.490; Nil'sky, op.cit.,p.167. Equally disputable is Crummeys assertion that Alekseev was the 'outstanding spokesman of the second generation of Theodosians' (The Old Believers, p.119). Other priestless Old Believers, such as the Filipponians and the beguny, rejected marriage totally, and no novozheny were to be found among them.

8 See, e.g., Ivan Alekseev, Slovo vozglasitel'noe, 1759; Razgovor o brakakh, pokazanie yako, and Na otvet gazhdatel'nyi, in which Alekseev assures the Vyg elders of having written this text against the Theodosian elders, not against them.

9 M.I.Lileev, op.cit., p.348.

attention of Vyg fathers. Prominent among them was the question of marriage. Afterwards, Ivan Alekseev had discussions in Moscow with two Old Believer teachers, Anton Ivanov and Semen Artem'ev. He was also at some time in the region of Podol'sk, around Bar, whence he moved to Kuta, in Poland, close to Hungary. In the course of these peregrinations he became acquainted with other prominent Old Believer leaders, and held discussions, and public disputes with them. The wide circle of his acquaintances explains why Alekseev was consulted by Old Believers all over Russia on various questions of religion and dogma (10).

Starodub, where Alekseev lived, housed a prosperous colony of priestly Old Believers as well as Pomoryans and Theodosians. The most important monastery of the priestly Old Believers, the Pokrovskii Klimovskii, was located there (11). In such surroundings, Alekseev directed most of his polemical vis towards an apologia for the priestless Old Believers against the criticism and, as he believed, the illegitimacy of the priestly church. The period of most intense polemical activity against the priestly Old Believers runs from about 1755 until about 1765 (12).

Although Alekseev's writings on the question of priesthood are not immediately relevant to the debate on marriage, they bear some attention in order better to understand Alekseev's thought in its wholeness.

10 P.S.Smirnov, op.cit., pp.490-491.

11 M.I.Lileev, op.cit., pp.345,257-258. On the Starodub Old Believers see also, by the same author, Novye materialy; and S. Golubev, 'Otzyv'.

12 P.S.Smirnov, op.cit., p. 653. For the popovtsy's arguments, see V. Druzhinin, "Svyashchennoierye".

Alekseev's major defence of the priestless Old Believers, the Istoriya o begstvuyushchem svyashchenstve (History of the fugitive priesthood) begins with a veritable apology of history, which deserves to be quoted:

"It is no small gift indeed this one which God has granted to humanity to enable it to correct its ways and to store in unperishable memory the history of things and events ancient to the benefit of many. How many most precious and useful things could vanish from us if the most glorious actions of honourable men were not preserved by history. But now things are not so: the beneficial zeal and marvelous action of God-loving men, who like tapers shone in the world, have been handed down in writing so that even after their death the zealous may gain strength, the weak may correct themselves and improve to the best, and the lazy ones may perceive their negligence.

I dare to say: the history of ancient events, especially of edifying and just ones, teaches how to correct human customs and bring to God those who heed its lessons. Paul says the same: remember your teachers. But how is one to remember them, if there are no histories about them? To this end I had great and indefatigable diligence in composing this history of the fugitive priesthood, for the following reasons: because we have frequently questioned these priests as to their institution and legitimacy. To this question of ours, they have always given this brief and easy answer: our Fathers blessed these first priests, and even now they act on the basis of this benediction. Therefore I had need to begin this history from the first times of the Change, and this narration, describing the first priests until our time..."(13).

In this introduction one can sense all the background of the studies of rhetoric for which Vyg and the Old Believers attached to its school were famous. After this measured and elegant introduction Alekseev narrates the story of the first priests of pre-schism consecration who remained with the Old Believers, and rejected the innovations ^{confirmed in} 1666/67. The acceptance and recognition of priests ordained by the Nikonian church was

13 Ivan Alekseev, Istoriya o begstvuyushchem svyashchenstve, pp.429-430 (all quotations from the BS edition) (Druzhinin, N.1).

regarded by Alekseev as being utterly uncanonical; equally uncanonical was to have priests blessed and reconfirmed in their rank by other priests, who were not invested with such an exclusively episcopal power. Alekseev concluded his historical survey by pointing out that in the beginning the highest care had been taken to avoid innovations. The first Old Believers priests were in full accord with the Fathers of Solovki, and they could not in any way be considered the forerunners of the priests of the priestly Old Believers. Alekseev denied the priestly Old Believers any right to call themselves the founders of their church. These first priests were very far from granting recognition to Nikonian ordinations. To Alekseev's mind, the contemporary Old Believers priests were a veritable absurdity: "The first priests were zealous about spiritual piety, the present ones about worldly honours; they found consolation in the spirit, while the present ones find it in their belly; they placed their hopes on God; while these ones rely on gold and those who ransom them" (14). In this treatise Alekseev's aim had be to deprive the priestly Old Believers of any aura of historical respectability by proving in detail how they could have no claim to affinity with those first, heroic and glorious priests who had bravely and unflinchingly held out against the liturgical innovations. In another work, his Kniga o begstvuyushchem iereystve, (Book on the fugitive priesthood), Alekseev expanded on the subject of tradition, and on the fact that only by respecting tradition can Christians hope to achieve salvation.

14 Ivan Alekseev, op.cit., p.517.

Tradition has its foundation both in the direct teaching of Christ, and of his apostolic disciples, who were the first bishops of Christianity (15). The doctrines of the priestly Old Believers could find no confirmation in either set of teachings. The priestly Old Believers fail to distinguish between consecration (svyashchenstvo) and priesthood (iereysto). Consecration, explained Alekseev, is an action transmitted by God, which consists in the establishment of sacerdotal ranks. It is composed of three parts: a material one, which consists in the imposition of the hands of the bishop on the head of the ordinand; a formal one, i.e., the words of the prayer pronounced by the bishop in the course of the ceremony of the imposition; and finally it consists of the perfecting powers of the Holy Spirit (16). The priest, explains Alekseev, is subjected to the grace of consecration in the same way as if he were exposed to the radiance of the sun. On account of this active grace, even priests of sinful and undignified life can be instruments of the grace of the Holy Ghost, thanks to the Grace transmitted by the imposition of the hands, and disregarding the individual quality of the priest (17).

According to Ivan Alekseev priesthood can exist only in a hierarchy of three ranks; he discussed this point in O vechnosti svyashchenstva Khristova suetno priemlyushchiya, vozrazhenie.

Three functions are necessary to the church: purification

15 Ivan Alekseev, Kniga o begstvuyushchem iereystve, pp.669-671. The reference is to Paul, Hebrews, 3-5.

16 Ivan Alekseev, op.cit., pp.671-673. The terms used by Alekseev for the three parts of which consecration is formed are: veshchestvo, vidotvorenie, and sovershitel'naya sila svyatogo Dukha.

17 Ibid., p.674.

(ochishchenie) which is performed by the deacons; enlightenment (prosvishchenie) which is performed by the priests, and perfection (sovershenie) which is accomplished by the bishops who fix the sacerdotal ranks. There can be no priests unless they are instituted through a bishop, while the priestly Old Believers were accused by Alekseev of believing erroneously that they could buy their priests from a church of different faith. Alekseev also ventured into mystical speculation about the nature of numbers, inspired by Dionysius the Areopagite; with these mystical speculations he was trying to prove that without the first number, i.e., without the unit, there can be nothing. Without a bishop, which is number one in the ecclesiastical hierarchy, there can be neither priests nor deacons (18). Against the priestless Old Believers, the priestly Old Believers argued that the celebration of the Eucharist was supposed to continue until Christ's second coming; they supported this point by reference to I Cor.XI.26: "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come". Having no priests, the priestless Old Believers could not celebrate the Eucharist, and found the point raised by the priestly Old Believers a difficult one to reply to.

Requested to intervene, Alekseev complete on 22 July 1756 his treatise O svyateyshchey evkharistii (On the most holy Eucharist) in which he denounced the uncanonicity of the sacramental sacrifice celebrated by priests of Nikonian ordination, who have no power to transform bread and wine into the body

18 Ivan Alekseev, O vechnosti, pp.592-598.

and blood of Christ, and examined the arguments of the priestly Old Believers. Alekseev was of the opinion that the words of the Nomokanon to the effect that God acts also by means of faulty (nepravil'nye) priests, were not intended for priests faulty in their consecration, but faulty in their conduct; not in their faith but in their way of life. The words of the Apostle "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come" (I Cor. XI.26) do not mean that the Eucharist will last until the end of time, but that "inexhausted divine grace" will always reside in the Holy Eucharist as long as it will be canonically celebrated. As for the prescription to commemorate Christ's death, it can be fulfilled by recalling and remembering the event and by the action of retelling it (istorichestvovati) without the actual celebration of the Eucharist. It is not the fault of the Old Believers if true Eucharist has come to an end; besides, the priestless Old Believers do have Communion, only they do not have it in the material form; they have a spiritual form of Communion, which is accomplished by means of a burning desire - and, in this form, it will last until the end of time in Christ's true church. Another similar argument used by the priestly Old Believers to support their claim was Christ's promise to be with those who believed in Him until the end. To refute this argument, Alekseev began a treatise in 1757, Pokazanie o sile vechnikh zavetov i prikazaniy Bozhiikh (Demonstration on God's obligations and commands) which he had planned in three parts, but never completed: apparently, only the introduction and the conclusion

exist (19) It is true, writes Alekseev, that Christ promised that he would be with the faithful until the end - but it is necessary to understand the sense of this promise. Reading the histories of ancient times, i.e., the Old Testament, it can be seen that God promised much that was never fulfilled to the Jews, the reason being that the Jews failed to keep their obedience to God by refusing to acknowledge His Son. For this reason God was no longer bound by His promise. Similarly Christ promised to be until the end with those who would abide by His prescriptions; if they failed in this, then Christ is no longer under any obligation. As Alekseev repeatedly pointed out, the priestly Old Believers have transgressed Christ's dispositions by having priests without Bishops. What matters most in things religious is faith. According to Basil the Great, faith is "unmediated communion with the word of God" (glagolom Bozhiim nerazmyshlennoe slozhenie) (20). Such was the faith of the just men of the Old Testament, Noah, Abraham, Moses. Paul speaks of such just men who by their faith alone defeated ferocious lions, fire and kingdoms. St. Augustine extolls faith, which saves the sinner and enlightens the blind. But the priestly Old Believers have no

19 P.S.Smirnov, op.cit., pp.497-504. This treatise is apparently dated 30 December 1757; see P.O. Lyubopytny, op.cit., p.114; it is Druzhinin n.34.

20 P.S. Smirnov, op.cit., pp.499-500.

faith, for they do not respect Christ's institutions and the rules of the Apostles; and they are under the delusion that priests of heretical consecration matter more than faith. But God saves and keeps his promise only to those who respect his commandments, not to those who disobey so that they may preserve the external appearance of priesthood. For they act not on the basis of faith, but of superstition. "What an evil is the contempt of God's commandment. It turns Man away from God, and deprives him of His promises and most miraculous gift, as it was shown in the case of Israel, to the benefit of those in the new Grace" (21). According to Ivan Alekseev, the priestly Old Believers have an uncanonical priesthood, which is not according to Christ and partakes unreligiously and unspiritually of the liturgy. It is an arbitrary concoction, alien to Apostolic tradition, and which constitutes a break with the legitimate Apostolic Succession. This work of Alekseev's is remarkable for its nearly Protestant emanation on the faith which saves, were it not, of course, that the faith he has in mind is by no means the individualist Protestant faith, but the faith which finds its full expression in a scrupulous fulfillment not only of God's commandments, but also in the most scrupulous obedience to canonical prescription and to tradition.

21 Ibid., p.503.

Alekseev's writing is pervaded by an Old Testament pathos, which must have had great weight in shaping the ideals of a community of men who believed themselves to be striving for justness and, like the just men of the times before Christ's birth, were isolated and churchless in a heathen world.

Alekseev perfected his argument of the necessity of three ranks in the church hierarchy in a treatise of 30 July 1762 with the title O vlasti preosvyashchennago china (On the power of the episcopal rank). The three ranks have been established by God himself and for this reason neither addition nor omissions are permissible. The priestly Old Believers transgress God's disposition by having only the two lower ranks, which cannot generate themselves, but ought to emanate from a superior power. This consideration provides Alekseev with the opportunity to discuss the transmission, source, and legitimacy of power in the church, also in the light of the structure of power in society. The inferior is under the power of his superior, without having any power over him. Power is not of a contractual nature, but flows in one direction only, from the top of the power-structure down to its most remote offshoots. It is not the inferior who is endowed with power, but the superior who is powerful by means of the subjugation to him of the inferior, whose eyes, ears, heart, mind, and all motions of the body are ready to obey his orders. Only by means of an order received from his superiors does a subordinate acquire power over his own inferiors. An inferior too has power, but only over his servants and family, not in civil matters. It is therefore clear, continues Alekseev, that "one

thing is power, another is man: for man and power do not coincide in their nature, as grass is not of one and the same nature with its colour"(22). Alekseev quoted the prophet Isaiah: "For all the flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass"(23). It is possible to observe the different degrees of ecclesiastical power by observing the planets in their reciprocal relations to each other. The episcopal rank is like the sun; as Christ told the apostles, "You are the light of the world"(24). A simple priest cannot by himself be a source of light, because although he can perform the actions which he has been ordained to perform, he has no power; like the moon, he takes his light from the sun, i.e., from the bishop, and like the moon, it is not in his power to shed his own light on others. Alekseev invokes the phenomenon of eclipse to make this point. Therefore, as the priests of the Old Believers have no bishops, they are like the moon in time of eclipse: they cannot enlighten and guide their flock, and they are themselves in darkness (25). The times are such that only faith, and faith alone, can save the believers. The Roman centurion, reflecting upon the nature of his military power over his subordinates, understood the magnitude of Christ's power, and that faith, and faith alone, would have been enough to save him. This very centurion on the day of judgement will condemn the priestly Old Believers who have not been able, by their natural reason alone, to recognize God's power, and have

22 Ivan Alekseev, O vlasti, p.604

23 Ivan Alekseev quotes from 1 Pet., I., 24, which in its turn is a reference to Isaiah XL, 6.

24 Ivan Alekseev, op.cit., p.605. From Matt.V, 14 and John VIII, 12:IX, 5.

25 Ibid., p.601.

confused episcopal power with priestly power, the light of the sun with the light of the moon (26). In this treatise Alekseev thus denies the material, external, mechanical prosecution of an extinguished priesthood by showing that power is not inherent in the person who has been invested with it, but resides in an inferior only so long as it keeps flowing from the primary source of power. A man cannot be identified with the power he happens to be administering - and to be a priest it does not suffice to perform the external actions which characterise a priest; such conduct would be a sham and not real power. The priestly Old Believers transgress the legitimate order of the transmission of power, which is from the top downwards. Alekseev restated his position concerning the priesthood in another work of 15 October 1762, O svyashchenstve Khristove k begstvyuyushchemu iereystvu na vtoraya predlozheniya ikh otvety (Answers on the priesthood of Christ to the second proposal of the fugitive priesthood) (27). In this treatise Alekseev expressed his alarm at the argument of the priestly Old Believers that, as there had been no ecumenical council to condemn the Nikonian priests, it was conceivable to take priests of Nikonian ordination. It seemed to Alekseev that if this argument was to be carried to its logical consequences and turned into a general principle, then no innovations at all could be avoided, not even those the priestly Old Believers were unwilling to accept. Alekseev pointed out that the absence

26 Ibid., pp.601,608. For the episode of the Roman centurion who compared the power of Jesus to his own power over his soldiers, see Matthew, VIII,8-9 and Luke, VII,6-8.

27 Resumed in P.S.Smirnov, op.cit., pp.668-672.

of a specific council of condemnation cannot be used as an indication of permissibility; there was no ecumenical council to condemn the new rites, but this is no reason to accept the Nikonian church. The priestly Old Believers were inconsistent and arbitrary in accepting certain innovations and refusing others, and by so doing were undermining tradition and the general principle that "innovations should be avoided". In fact, continues Alekseev, there can be no Christianity where there is no true priesthood; it is true that it has been said that "Christ and priesthood are equally immortal", but there are two ways to interpret the concept of priesthood. There is a visible priesthood, and there is also an invisible one (28). The first one is composed of priests who can be seen with one's physical eyes and can be watched while they celebrate the divine service; the second one is the "invisible presence of Christ himself during service, which cannot be perceived by the physical eye, and can only be discerned by the eye of faith... the visible priests serve the invisible, first priest, our Lord Jesus Christ, whose instruments they are. And He, by his wisdom acts only by means of the properly ordained priests and does not sanctify the deviant ones"(29). Christ, argues Alekseev, does not act through the priest of Nikonian consecration, because a consecration not canonical is a deviation and deformation of the right one. For these reasons the priestly Old Believers do not belong to the

28 Ibid., p.671. The Russian terms are svyashchenstvo chuvstvitel'noe and svyashchenstvo nechustvitel'noe.

29 Loc.cit.

priesthood of Christ (30).

The treatises which have been discussed so far are the known writings of Alekseev on priesthood, which he wrote as part of his polemic against the priestly Old Believers. But there was another question which deeply concerned him and about which he had lengthy discussions with the priestless Old Believers, namely the sacrament of marriage. Ivan Alekseev was particularly indignant of the Theodosian statute approved at the Polish council of 1751, especially as he was under the impression that not even the Theodosian elders complied with the prescription of chastity. He recalled his feelings on the matter in the treatise he wrote on the subject of marriage, O tayne braka: "My soul was repelled by these people, who boasted of their respect for the law and expelled other people, while they themselves were blind and did not understand the meaning of the law; in their ignorance they shout "Get out! Get out!" - the louder the better, they think. And on the basis of arguments that are weak and incorrectly attributed to the Church they shout unreasonably "It is written so". But they don't know what is written, and do not understand its meaning" (31).

30 Ivan Alekseev seems to be the author also of Otvety na voprosy vetkovskikh of 19 April 1764 which Druzhinin does not list among Alekseev's works (n.300 p.346). In this treatise are expounded the same arguments as Alekseev's about the necessity of three ranks for the perfection of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. The manuscript book contains other works by Alekseev, among them the curious O perenesenii moshchey Nikoly Chudotvortsya; St. Nicholas was the most popular of all saints in Russia: see B.A.Uspensky, Filologicheskaya razyskaniya.

31 Quoted in I.Nil'sky, Semeynaya zhizn', p.110. This passage is taken from the introductory chapter to Alekseev's treatise by the title 'O svyato y tserkvi khristove, yako znati yu podobaet ot osnovaniya eya'.

In Alekseev's words one detects all the exasperation of a new generation of Old Believers who, while retaining their faith, had grown weary and impatient of the oppressive authority wielded by uncultured elders who, knowing only the Chasoslov and the Psaltyr', were trying to impose the fossilized prescription of a bygone age, the age of fierce persecution and heroic martyrdom. To Alekseev such Old Believers gave the impressions that the passive imitation of the way of life of their elders was more important than the Gospel itself. The inflexibility of the Theodosians was all the more intolerable to him because their cultural standards seemed to him far lower than those of Vyg, where a school was flourishing and chastity was actually observed at least inside the walls of the monastic community (32). Moved by his indignation against the Theodosians Alekseev wrote therefore in 1759 Slovo vozglasitel'noe na devstvennyi sobor priderzhashchiy zhen i dev (Conclusive homily against the celibate council which keeps women and girls).

The target of his polemic was not just the rank-and-file Theodosian, whose yielding to the suggestions of the flesh could at the most elicit a sigh of compassionate reproach and desolation at the weakness of human nature, but the very Theodosian elite, i.e., their congregation or sobor, composed of the senior, most respected and socially most prominent members, who should comply fully with the religious precepts and take upon themselves the sins and failings of the less virtuous.

32 I.Nil'sky, op.cit., pp. 109-111.

Alekseev remarked indignantly that behind the Theodosian resolution to excommunicate married men and women lay a most poisonous snake, and that many weeds of illegality grow among the pure wheat of Christ's flock; the Theodosians would desert their own wives, in obedience to their own rules, which prescribe a celibate way of life, but then, "driven by their needs keep other people's wives and girls, they run away from the smoke, and fall into the fire, they fancy themselves faultless, and are full of sin" (33). Whatever their lofty ideals, the Theodosians were not capable of living up to the standards of saints like Arseny the Great, Simeon the Stylite or Marcian, who kept themselves away from women and sin. The Theodosians, lamented Alekseev, would comply only formally with the prescription of celibacy, and circumvent it by keeping women at home, under the pretence of domestic servants which they allegedly needed for the carrying out of household chores. But, objected Alekseev, if the Theodosians intend to live up to their monastic ideal, then they ought to bear in mind that monastic rules do not by any means allow for cohabitation with women and that the Theodosians were renovating the errors of the ancient heretics who refused marriage only to fall pray to the passions of the flesh (34). What was most infuriating to Alekseev was that these self-styled holy men, these Tartuffes, as it were, were held in great respect on account of their holiness.

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, said Christ. For ye compass sea and land to make one

33 Slovo vozglasitel'noe, f.97v. I presume that Alekseev is referring to the resolutions of the Polish council of 1751.

34 Ibid., ff.102-104.

proselyte, and when he be made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than of yourself (Mt.XXIII,15)
That's what the Theodosians do; they wander from town to town, they go to all houses, and respected honourable houses at that, and under the guise of their hypocritical holiness they exhort people to lead a restrained and chaste life. And as soon as they have gained hold on them they indulge in lustful and filthy actions, of which the sect is full" (35).

To the Theodosian elders Alekseev opposed the good example of the Pomoryans who were coherent with their own rules (36).

In another work, Razgovor o brakakh vneshnyago venchaniya kratko voobrazhennyi, nekoego pomortsa s Feodoseevym chelovekom (Imagined brief dialogue of a Pomoryan with a Theodosian on marriages celebrated outside the Church) against a Theodosian who claims that according to the rules young people cannot be allowed to marry, the Pomoryan manifests his deep mistrust of the canonicity of the prohibition of marriage and accuses the Theodosians of having the institution of housekeepers instead of the one of marriage. The fictitious Theodosian cannot but admit that it is indeed so, but at least for those who sin with their cooks there is the possibility of repenting, confessing and

35 Ibid., f.109, also quoted in Nil'sky, op.cit., p.112. In O tayne braka Alekseev remarked ironically of the Theodosians that "Some of the learned ones, or elders, who enjoy a good reputation, have cooks. They are serfs of Christ, while the cooks are maids of Christ, and for this reason many wear white, simple clothes and hats in the old style as a sign of their service to God and of their holiness" (quoted by Nil'sky, loc.cit.).

36 Ivan Alekseev, op.cit., ff.116v-120.

expiating, while married people have no way to save their souls from the consequences of sin.

Alekseev realized perhaps that more than simple indignation was necessary in order to induce the Theodosians out of the fortress of their deeply felt and simple belief that as Antichrist had swept away the church and marriage with it, only repentance was left for those who transgressed this difficult yet clear prescription not to marry. After all, it is with striking ease that belief in the intrinsic evil of lust has gripped popular imagination throughout centuries of history, inspiring awesome veneration for those who proved themselves capable of resisting the promptings of the flesh; at the same time failure to observe the ideal on the part of simple folk need not cause scandal. As the lack of priesthood was the most obvious impediment to the celebration of marriages, a way of solving the problem was to try to restore a full church hierarchy to the Old Believers. Mikhail Vyshatin, for instance, as mentioned in the previous chapter, had set off towards Palestine in order to retrace the last "Christian Ordination" (Khristova Khirotoniya). Alekseev tried to find a different way out of the impasse; instead of searching for a bishop who would provide the church hierarchy with its missing rank, he re-examined the concept of marriage in general, ultimately reaching the conclusion that it did not depend on the existence of an Orthodox hierarchy. Naturally, he started by reconsidering the first important exchange of opinion on the subject, namely the correspondence between Andrey Denisov and Feodosy Vasil'ev. He came to the conclusion that the great Vyg

fathers had been wrong, and Feodosy Vasil'ev right, to recognize marriages celebrated before the conversion to the truly Christian faith:

"Seeing what disorder there was in Christ's church, with God's help I took upon myself the trouble to research on which foundations was based this condition of wifelessness, and by which saints it was confirmed and how it was defined by the Holy church of the East; and in this research I spent much time with great effort and hardship to the neglect of my bodily needs, reading many canonical collections and many books of history, to check whether there had ever been such prescription from the saints, or such a case in the Eastern Church, of dissolution of a marriage celebrated outside the Church, or of couples excommunicated on this account and excluded from the sharing of the food, drink and prayer: but nowhere could I find such a thing, and I found that the Holy Church always accepted such marriages without forcing the couples to divorce, and deemed heretics those who would reject the validity of such a marriage and take concubines instead" (37).

It must be stressed that Alekseev did not in any way depart from the definition of marriage provided by the Bol'shoy Katikhizis and which is worth quoting at this point. To the question "what is marriage", the answer is:

"marriage is a sacrament by which the spouses out of pure love in their hearts for each other agree between themselves to take a vow freely to enter into a common and unbreakable union blessed by God, as Adam and Eve before the fall had a legitimate and true marriage without bodily intercourse. This is an indissoluble union in cohabitation of husband and wife according to a lawful ritual, which receives its special virtue from God, so that their children be generated and brought up in a good Christian way, and they be preserved from the loathsome sin of lust and incontinence".

And to the question "who is the minister of the sacrament of marriage?" the answer is:

"The first is God himself as Moses the God-seer writes: and I God the Lord gave my blessing and said: be

37 Ivan Alekseev, preface to O tayne braka quoted in Nil'sky, op.cit., p.117.

fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and rule it, and in the Gospel the Lord confirms this saying: what God united, let it not be put asunder by Man, for the people who marry perform themselves this sacrament saying: I take you as my wife, I take you as my husband, because he who sells himself is both the thing itself and the merchant, and these in this sacrament sell themselves and dedicate themselves together to this honourable work" (38).

From these definitions, and other readings, Alekseev drew his own observations concerning marriage in the exceptional conditions of the Last Days. Marriage was a sacrament, acknowledged Alekseev, but not all sacraments are alike. While baptism and the eucharist cannot by any means be administered by heretics without losing their sacramental and saving nature, this is not the case with marriage, which even if not celebrated by an Orthodox priest does not lose its sacramental character, which consists for Christians in being an image, a metaphor of the mysterious union of Christ with the Church (39). Alekseev relies here on the ambiguity of the Russian word for "sacrament", "tayna", which literally means "mystery" (40). But, continued Alekseev, apart from being the image of the union of Christ with the Church, marriage was a sacrament instituted by God the Father on the creation of the first man by the blessing imparted to Adam and Eve. It did not

38 Quoted by I. Nil'sky, op.cit., pp.123-124

39 Ivan Alekseev, Pazgovor o brakakh, f.41., and O tayne braka, quoted in Nil'sky, op.cit., p.121

40 See D.Wendebourg, 'Mysterion und Sakrament'.

therefore need an ecclesiastical sanction in order to be valid:

"The sacrament of marriage does not receive its sanction from the ecclesiastical ceremony, but from God's participation (sodeyatel'stvo) and from His words ("be fruitful and multiply"); while the other sacraments of the church have their foundation on Christ's passion and sacrifice, and can be performed only by means of the Holy Ghost. Such are baptism, ordination, confirmation, which all acquire through Christ their saving virtue of which the heretics are deprived. And for this reason these sacraments cannot be accepted from the heretics as they do not have their foundation in Christ and the Holy Ghost. And for this reason the Church accepts equally all marriages, from all people, whether pagans who do not know God, or Jews, or heretics as long as these marriages be legitimate according to their matrimonial custom. The other sacraments with the exception of this one, are not accepted by the Church" (41).

These words of Alekseev's do not seem to justify Nil'sky's contention that Ivan Alekseev envisaged marriage as a civil, purely secular institution. The ultimate point of reference remains God, and marriage is still seen in a religious perspective. What Alekseev is doing is making a distinction between sacraments which have their foundation in Christ, and sacraments which have their sole foundation in God the Father. This being so, it did not matter that Nikonian priests did not benefit from the grace of the Holy Ghost and of Christ, because this grace is not essential in marriage. The union of husband and wife does not derive its legitimacy from the action of the priest, but from the "natural force infused by God in the first creatures" (42).

41 O tayne braka, quoted in I. Nil'sky, op.cit., p.129.

42 Ivan Alekseev, Razgovor o brakakh, f.42. The controversy whether prechristian humanity could achieve sinlessness and salvation goes back at least to Pelagius: see Frend, Saints and sinners, p.129.

Studying the Bible and many books of history, Alekseev had noticed that there were times during which marriages were celebrated without any church blessing, on the sole basis of the mutual consent of the spouses and of their parents. "The peoples of Adam's time saw the beginning and the end of marriage exclusively on a foundation of love; as a beginning, the mutual predisposition (blagokhotenie), as an end the expression in words of common agreement of the parents of the two spouses, and of the spouses themselves." (43). There were times when marriages had their foundation "in the law of nature, even before there were written laws", not only among pagans, but even among the chosen people of God, the Jews; such was the union of Isaac and Rebecca (44). Only in a later period did Jews and pagans start to validate their unions in their temples. But marriage had its first, firm and self-sufficient basis in the unwritten law of nature, while the celebration of marriage in the temple pertains to the domain of "written law" and it was introduced not because without it the marital union would not have been legitimate, but

43 Ivan Alekseev, O tayne braka section 'Razglogol'stvie kratkoe k voprosayushchim o raznstve suda v priyatii novovenshavshikaya brachno', quoted in Nil'sky, op.cit., p.125.

44 Ibid., p.123, section 'Vina eya zhe radi i eretikov i elinov i prochikh nevernykh ne lepo est' rastorgati ili povtoryati braki. The idea that in converting the infidel nature and its law were of greater significance than God as known through the revelation belonged to Raymond Lull: see A.Kh.Gorfunkel, "Andrey Belobotsky", p.209.

exclusively in order to add to the consensus of the spouses and their parents, the consensus and recognition of society. The aim was to make these unions stronger and more lasting ones by having the spouses bound to each other not only before themselves and their families, but also before the whole of society (45). Alekseev noticed that even in the first centuries of Christianity marriages were not concluded in church; they were usually entered upon at home, and only later there might be a blessing in the church. The third book of Dionysius the Aeropagite, The ecclesiastical hierarchy contains chapters on the priesthood, on the eucharist, on the chrism, on the ecclesiastical hierarchy, on the perfection of monasticism, on the lamentations for the dead. But there is no chapter about marriage, an indication, according to Alekseev, that it had not as yet been instituted (46).

Alekseev's definition of marriage made it possible to show what was relevant for its validity, and to argue that for the Old Believers who lived in the times of Antichrist the lack of a priesthood was not an impediment to marriage. On this basis he proceeded to object to the Theodosians, who prohibited marriage and were trying to enforce universal monasticism. He argued that the couples could have their marriages celebrated in

45 Ibid., pp.125-126

46 Ibid., p.126, sections 5 and 9 of O tayne braka. Alekseev actually refers to this book, which in Russian was properly known as O tserkovnoy ierarkhii, with the title of O tserkovnom svyashchennonachalii. See K.I.Skvortsov, Issledovanie voprosa and Dionysius, Svyatago otsa nashego. Alekseev calls it "the third book" meaning that it occupies the third place after On the divine names and The celestial hierarchy. These writings were popular among the Old Believers; Avvakum begins his Zhitie with the first.

See the original, Peri tēs ekklēsiastikēs ierarkhias, in Migne, Patrologiae..., vol.III, Paris 1857.

Nikonian churches and denied that the church ever prohibited entertaining relationships with heretics and non-Christians (47). Therefore there was nothing objectionable in having recourse to the social services of the dominant church in order to register marriages, and thus gain social recognition for the union. The celebration of the marriage, "nothing more than a popular Christian custom which has no direct correlation to the substance of marriage", would help to strengthen the union; besides, it was socially convenient for distinguishing a legitimate union from a sinful one (48). Alekseev did not believe a marriage celebrated with the sole consent of the spouses to be satisfactory and legitimate. He was convinced that social recognition and validity before the state were also necessary; hence the need for a registration to take place in the Nikonian church, to make sure that the disorders he so much deplored among the Theodosians would be avoided (49). To enter into a marital relationship with the sole foundation of the spouses' and parents' consents

"is not possible, for marriage is made up of three different consents: the consent of the parents, the consent of the husband and wife, and the general consent of the people. But we, having truthfully understood Christ, the source of our salvation, accept marriage in whatever church it is celebrated, be it orthodox or heretic. For this reason, having secured the first two consents, it is necessary to conclude the marriage in the church in respect of this customary third consent. In this way marriage will be reliable and solid, confirmed as it will be by custom, it will be honourable according to the Apostle, and the love in it will be indissoluble and edifying like a solid edifice... and behold therefore, how popular custom is the great fortress of marriage and of its honourability; for this

47 Ivan Alekseev, Razgovor o brakakh, f.40.

48 Ivan Alekseev, O tayne braka, quoted by Nil'sky, op.cit., p.122.

49 Ibid., p.129.

reason among pagans and among heretics too marriages were consolidated by custom; equally among the Orthodox marriage is honourable and legitimate in the respect of the Christian custom. In this respect to base it on the sole domestic agreement is neither solid nor honourable, and can lead into great disgrace before God and Man, such as sodomy, lust and all sorts of disorder" (50).

A ceremony celebrated by a Nikonian priest was perfectly compatible with what had a real and substantial importance in marriage: the mutual love of the spouses, their assent to marriage, expressed in front of witnesses, and the consent of their parents (51). Alekseev was extremely strict on the question of parental consent, he specifically stated that a woman who marries against the will of her parents is a fornicatress, and deemed the sole will of the spouses by no means sufficient to give legitimacy to the union. To the Theodosians who objected that they were therefore right in discontinuing unions that had not been blessed by Theodosian parents, Alekseev replied speciously that children of such parents who taught them doctrines contrary to the will of God, were not to be condemned for disobeying parental authorities; quite the opposite: God would have punished such parents, who forbade marriage, and their teachers, because legitimate marriage has been sanctioned by such teachers as the Apostle Paul and St. John Chrysostom (52). Alekseev condemned the Theodosians who refused to admit married people to confession unless they agreed to separate; he commented that it was most Antichrist-like to reject repenting souls, all

50 Ibid., pp.129-130.

51 Ibid., p.121 and Ivan Alekseev, Razgovor o brakakh, ff.44v-45.

52 Ivan Alekseev, Razgovor o brakakh, ff.43v-44.

the more so as their marriage was not a sin (53). Married people did not deserve to be treated like beasts, even worse, as beasts can suckle their offspring, while Theodosian mothers were forbidden to suckle their babies lest they might transmit to them their impurity; so they had to feed their babies with cow's milk, as if animals were purer than human beings (54). Alekseev also rejected the view that mothers would remain impure for lack of purificatory prayers recited by a priest. Such prayers, observed Alekseev, were unknown in Apostolic times, when houses where a child had been born and the child and mother themselves were not considered defiled and impure (55). In his objections to the Theodosians Alekseev touched upon the question of the sources which are relevant to the establishment of rules binding on the behaviour of Christians. He criticized the Theodosians for basing their resolutions exclusively on the authority of their elders and on the rules established by them, to the neglect of the resolutions of the Ecumenical Councils and the patristic writings which constitute together the judgement of the Holy Church (56). That is to say, even if the church as a visible institution no longer existed, its spiritual structure, as it were, survived in its canon law and in the Holy Scriptures. The habit of the Theodosians of having recourse to the exclusive arbitration of

53 Ivan Alekseev, O brakakh somnenie novodyashchikh, f.24. Although this tract does not figure in the Druzhinin catalogue, I have attributed it to Alekseev on the basis of the subject, the style, the arguments employed and its location in a miscellany of Alekseev's writings.

54 Ibid., f.28v.

55 Alekseev wrote on this subject O istinnoy tserkvi, of 25 April 1757, and Muzhu chestnomu, in May 1758. See also P.S. Smirnov, op.cit., pp.653-659.

their elders was unjustified, restricted and misleading, because customs and individual pronouncement expressed by Old Believers leaders in isolation from other communities varied from place to place; this resulted in a general situation of utter confusion when it came to enunciating rules which were supposed to be binding for all (57). But the Christian Church had a wider scope than the dead end of Theodosian monasticism. "In all questions, in all disputes, there is the Holy Catholic Church, which functions as a court of arbitration for all the people, and which is headed by Christ himself". In the Church "the offices of judge and arbitrators are performed by the ecumenical and local councils" and on that pillar the pursuit of truth must be found; for three things are necessary for the definition of all matters: "a judge, a law, and a custom legitimized by a long history" (58). Elsewhere, Alekseev expressed his disapproval of the Theodosians' authoritative sources

"How senseless and deaf are your hearts to the voice of reason and truth; your hearts are indeed of stone, like your heads which are unable to understand real reason and meaning. What your elders did, is for you a hard law which withstands no objection; but how about the ancient elders, the witnesses and servants of God's word, the Holy Apostles and their successors the archbishops of the church, they don't count a thing for you, do they? Do you not know that not all words pronounced by an elder are of necessity in accord with God's will? For the ancient Jews also preserved with utmost solicitude the traditions of their elders, but Christ told them on this account that in the name of the traditions of their elders they were destroying God's commandment" (59).

56 Ivan Alekseev, O brakakh somnenie, ff.24-26.

57 Ibid., f.25.

58 Ibid., ff.25-v.

59 Ivan Alekseev, Slovo vozglasitel'noe. Quoted by Nil'sky, op.cit., p.111.

The discontinuity of the visible church with its hierarchy as a consequence of the Last Days allowed for every Christian to have direct, personal access to the sources of the Law, using solely his intellectual capacity and knowledge in its interpretation of it without any mediation of priests - a result, if not a motivation, reminiscent of certain aspects of Protestantism.

Alekseev had argued convincingly that both pre-Christian humanity and the Christian church of apostolic times did without religious marriages; nevertheless, it remained necessary to explain how it had come about that priestless Old Believers unanimously excluded for Christians the possibility of leading a married life. To this end, Alekseev attempted an historical critique of how such uncanonical tradition had crystallized in a severe prohibition. The beginning of "wifelessness" (bezzhenstvo) among the Old Believers had been the following

"When because of the introduction of the innovations many people fled away to different lands and places, wishing to preserve the old ways, different divisions arose among them; some required a priesthood for the necessities of life in this world, while others being more apprehensive on account of the innovations, chose to lead an unmarried life, and to keep like sisters their legitimate spouses. As they had no priests, they took council together and deemed it desirable that all should lead their life outside marriage, and that married men could cohabit with their wives without physical intercourse, the unfulfilled desire of which it was possible to endure on account of their fresh zeal. And some of them chose to live in chastity and subjugation of the flesh in the forest and in deserted places. Married people, following this example, decided to do the same; and in this way of life some grew old, others died, with no need of copulating with women (zhenskoe sovokuplenie) and this custom came to be regarded as a duty, became a fixed rule; they began to reject marriage and to prohibit married people from having children. And if someone was not able to resist his natural weakness, and living with his wife came to have children, they would no longer be admitted to share

food, drink and prayers with the rest of the community
" (60).

The ascetism of the first priestless Old Believers, who lived in dangerous clandestinity, was but the product of historical circumstances, and lay at the root of the prohibition to marry. But times had changed, argued Alekseev, and the conditions which had prompted the first Old Believers to renounce marriage no longer existed. The Old Believers no longer had to hide in forests and hermitages to escape persecution; they had now settled in towns and villages, exposed to the world and its temptations. Ascetism and religious zeal could but weaken.

"Our fathers lived away from the world, leading their lives in hermitages and small monastic communities (*skity*); for this reason not only they (i.e., the priestless Old Believers) but also the priestly Old Believers who led such a way of life, had no need of marriage, not because they refused it or disapproved of it, but because they did not want to create confusion in the hermitages and did not wish to found communities. But we live in the world, we are constantly amidst the temptations of the world, and we come every day across such sights as are enough to perturb the soul and shake the heart, and from which we were very far in the hermitages. For this reason we cannot take as a model the way of life of the hermitages" (61).

Alekseev was of the view that the way children were brought up was most unlikely to make ascetes of them: "Look around, and you will see how you yourself give occasion to become corrupted to your children, giving them complete freedom in what they eat, how they dress and adorn themselves, in visiting other houses, in walking around more than is necessary, all things which are very

60 Ivan Alekseev, O tayne braka, preface, quoted by Nil'sky, op.cit., p.114.

61 Ibid., p.115, chapter 13 of O tayne braka.

powerful in igniting the flames of lust". The young people had plenty of opportunities to fall into temptation

"Nowadays men and women, girls and boys assemble together in houses, walk and play together, they are inflamed by the fire of love and their minds are naturally occupied by these thoughts; they are drawn to each other by unfulfilled desire, and in this they become ruined. They dress themselves splendidly having nothing but lustful aims in mind. And what should one say about the girls? Desiring desperately to marry, they adorn their foreheads in gold, put pomades in their hair, adorn themselves with light and colourful dresses and arrange their whole body in such a way that it may inspire lustful desires. As this is the way things are, it would be much better if they were allowed to take a legitimate husband" (62).

Changed historical circumstances had engendered new needs, different from those of the first Old Believers. Alekseev actually puts great stress on this concept of need, and he is prepared to take it into account in the establishment of rules of behaviour in a way which may well have been shocking for Old Believers used to referring only to the prescriptions of the church, disregarding what effect they would have on human life. It was a mentality of obedience, reverence, and unlimited duty towards the divinity. The idea of "need", of needs that were purely human, must have had a certain impertinent ring. Wasn't life in this world, after all, nothing but a trial and something deserving only the most contemptuous neglect? What Alekseev was doing was to have a look at life as it really was, and from the observations of the unbridged gap between ideals and actual behaviour, to undertake to reshape the ideals so that they would be cut down to the size of human nature - a human nature which after all God Father had solemnly blessed. It was this idea, that

62 Ibid., pp.115-116.

"man needs marriage and that chastity must be a free choice" that had started him on his search (63). This attitude, the mentality it revealed, was new; at least no one before had dared to articulate it among the Old Believers. In order better to legitimize his argument of "need", Alekseev undertook to show that even the most revered Old Believers had created things anew whenever the need for them had arisen; it was no use cutting short every argument with a peremptory "That's the way our ancestors did it";

"To people of other communities, to outsiders, this answer is not kind and it is unsatisfactory for those who seek the truth; because all sects could answer "because our fathers did so", but a dispute cannot stop at that. Our fathers, as long as they did not need it, did not preach the necessity of worshipping God, but as soon as they felt a need for it, they also found the necessary arguments to justify the introduction of collective worship. The same happened to us: as long as there was no need among the people to marry, there was no mention of it either; but as soon as the need arose, a justification was also sought. But there is no reason to marvel at this and jump up in wonder saying; our fathers had no marriage. We must consider dispassionately such a matter; because our fathers lived away from the world,... and we cannot therefore take them as models (64).

This is most unlike the mentality of the Theodosians, who refused to recognise the unbridgeability of the gap between prescriptions and the real way of life, and conceived only of the possibility of repenting for all those - never mind how many - who failed to live up to the ideal obligations. The prohibition of marriage was justified by the Theodosians with Paul's words concerning the Last Days: "they that have wives be as though they had none"

63 A.I. Zhuravlev, Polnoe istoricheskoe izvestie, p.153.

64 Ivan Alekseev, O tayne braka, section 'O prelozhenii prezhnikh del i obychaev', quoted in I. Nil'sky, op.cit., pp.139-140.

(1 Cor.VII.29) and of Christ: "and woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!" (Mt.XXIV.19), and with the argument that there were no longer priests who could legitimately celebrate marriages. In any case, all Theodosians were bound by a vow of chastity, because of which they could not enter into marriage. Alekseev disagreed as to the interpretation of those words of the Gospel and believed them to refer to the disgrace of Jerusalem on the day of its destruction (65). As for Paul's words, "but this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none" Alekseev commented: "The Apostle wrote about the transition of the forms of this world during which things will be undone and pass over and not about the real intercourse of marriage, as if a wife could no longer be called a wife, but a sinner, as your teachers argue having not understood the Scriptures" (66). Besides,

"the words of the Apostle must be taken into their entirety, so that we understand them according to reason. The Apostle says this: if you have entered into marriage you have not sinned: and if a woman has intercourse, she has not sinned either. She will only suffer in the flesh. And I tell you brothers that when time will be over, those who have wives will be like not having, those who cry, as if they had not cried, those who are joyful, as if they had not been joyous, those who have bought, as if they had nothing: those who aspire at this world, as if they had not: for the image of this world is transient". Such are the words of the Apostle. But look at what happens: he who aspires to this world, he possesses it now, he who rejoices in this world, rejoices even now, he who has a sorrow and needs to cry will cry even now... it is in vain, therefore, that you quote the Apostle..for Paul did not write only on wives, but on trade too, and on other matters, which

65 Ibid., pp. 135-136.

66 Ibid., pp.135-136.

still exist now as they did before. Therefore his words are to be interpreted as indicating the end of this life, for all will pass: riches, glory, wives: the way of this world will pass (67).

To the Theodosians Alekseev also objected that a vow of chastity not pronounced out of free choice would not lead to salvation. In this respect Paul's recommendation to Timothy not to accept vows of chastity from women who had not yet reached the age of sixty was exemplary; while the Theodosians imposed a vow of chastity on old and young alike, and let them all live together, exposed to the stress of great temptations (68). The Theodosians self-justification by means of an appeal to the monastic rules of Basil the Great was equally irrelevant, because monastic vows of chastity are entered upon out of free choice, and not all Christians were expected to take them, but only a chosen minority. The Theodosians force people who convert to their sect to take a vow of chastity, threatening otherwise not to accept them within the allegedly unique Christian church. Alekseev accused the Theodosians of intimidation and compulsion:

"People who convert to your sect are thus examined and asked to live in chastity as a condition of acceptance. If you will not lead a virginal life, we shall have no contact whatsoever with you, and you will not be considered to be a Christian. The newly converted, terrified by these words with the prospect of losing all

67 Ibid., p.136.

68 Ibid., p.137.

hope of salvation, unwillingly pronounces a vow, and recognises virginity and chastity as the only accepted way of life. This is unheard of, because the Holy Church never imposes chastity as did the ancient heretics Marcionites, Montanists and the like who at first forced converts to live in chastity outside marriage, but then let them cohabit with women and girls, just like your chaste people are doing" (69).

Alekseev argued that vows pronounced under conditions of intimidation and threat of exclusion could have no moral value whatsoever in the eyes of God, and that even the chastity of those who somehow managed to keep the vow could not be regarded as a virtue. Both Paul and Basil the Great write of free, not of compulsory vows. Paul had clearly expressed how delighted he would have been if all Christians could have been capable of equalling him in virtue. But he realised that all men receive their different share of talent and virtue from God, and they cannot all be alike. Chastity is of course superior, but if one is to be tormented and consumed by the desires of the flesh, he

69 Ivan Alekseev, O tayne braka, section 'Na feodoseevy otvergayushchie braki i na razvody ikh v brakakh', quoted in I. Nil'sky, op.cit., p.138. On Marcionites and Montanists, see Frend, op. cit., pp.55,69 and passim.

had better marry, "for its better to marry than to burn" (1 Cor.VII,9). The church exhorts to virtues chosen of one's own free will, concluded Alekseev (70). It seems that enough Old Believers had their marriages celebrated in Nikonian churches for Alekseev to find it necessary to establish a distinction between those who were married and those who were not but did lead a chaste life; otherwise there might have been the danger that the awareness of the fundamental difference between the old, pious devotions and the new, heretical rituals might be blurred. With remarkable refinement of thought, Alekseev wrote that:

"The reason for establishing this discrimination [razn'stva] in the acceptance of the new marriages has nothing to do with a desire to please and is not an error [ne est' vina chelovekougodiya ili zabluzhdeniya], but has to do with the need to perpetuate the memory of it (of the schism?PGP) by this symbolic discrimination so that it remain immortal. Thus people will wonder why some are accepted and why some are not, and future generations will explain that this mnemonic sign [pamyatnoe znamenovanie] has been established so as to preserve from errors those Christians who live in the world [vo khraneniya vneshniya strany]: so that on seeing themselves excommunicated on account of their marriage, they will be reminded and made aware of the uncanonicity of the priests who have celebrated the marriage. This must be so in spite of the fact that the marriage itself, on account of its legitimate foundation and of the necessity of celebrating it in such a way and for the continuity of Christianity [za povsemstvo china khristianskogo] is accepted by our church as containing the substantial attributes of marriage [za deystvo sushche braka]. Nevertheless, other sacraments performed

70 Ibid., p.139, section 'Izyskanie ob obetakh, yako ne po soglasiyu svyatya tserkvi obety ne imut sily i prestupayai siya ne podlezhit kanonam'.

by that church do not have the substance of sacraments" (71).

To the objection that the early Church accepted all marriages alike without drawing any distinction and discrimination between them, Alekseev retorted that if the Old Believers would not put the marriage celebrated by Nikonian priests in a category apart, step by step the Nikonian priests would be requested to perform all other sacraments and rituals of which the need arose as a consequence of marriage: the churching of women, baptism of infants, and so on. The early Church was not facing such a danger, because people who had been married while still outside the church would after conversion be able to have all other sacraments performed by a legitimate priesthood, such as the one of the Early Church no doubt was. The Old Believers, argued Alekseev, had no legitimate priesthood and for this reason could not afford to be lax on the question of sacraments. Because there was nothing to make sure that in the end Christians at large would not get into the habit of asking Nikonian priests to celebrate for them whatever sacraments they deemed necessary to achieve salvation; in such a way, Christians might end up accepting the Nikonian Church altogether. In order to avoid this, wisdom required that a very clear, indeed symbolic and palpable discrimination be fixed between those who had not been in touch with a Nikonian priest, and those who had been in such a position

71 Ivan Alekseev, O tayne braka, section 'Razglagol'stvie kratkoe k voproschayushchim o raz'nstve suda v priyatii novovenshavshchikhsya brachno', quoted in I.Nil'sky, op.cit., p.160. I disagree with Nil'sky, who finds Alekseev contradictory in his pressing for the acceptance of marriage on the one hand and insisting on a discrimination of married people on the other - for the reason adduced by Alekseev himself.

as to need his services. "So as from this permission should not come bad results, by means of restriction of their access to the church, they are made to feel and know clearly that such priests are not accepted in other sacraments with the exception of those occasional marriages." Alekseev regarded the discrimination as an act of paternal guidance: "For love is also expressed by preventing by means of some act of opposition the unreasonable ones from doing evil" (72).

On the other hand Alekseev was not consistent in his application of excommunication of Christians married in the Nikonian church; apparently he reserved the "medicine of excommunication" for those - the majority - whom he regarded as being weak in their mind and whom he feared could easily be led astray towards a full acceptance of the Nikonian Church. It would seem therefore that the excommunication of married couples served exoteric purposes, while the speculation on the nature of marriage was probably regarded as doctrinally esoteric, something that only the most enlightened Old Believers would be able to grasp without damaging the common cause. The doctrine of marriage was food for the few, i.e., for the elders who were in charge of the communities. If one is to believe Nil'sky, Alekseev would sometimes make an exception for the occasional lay Old Believers who were married and whom he regarded as being sufficiently enlightened to be able to stick to the right doctrines without any threat of

72 Ibid., p.161. Nil'sky is of the opinion that in the end this discrimination worked against Alekseev, because it served to perpetuate the prejudice against marriage and the belief that marriage was illegitimate.

excommunication. Excommunication, that is, fulfilled the function of a "mnemonic sign", of a reminder used in order to inculcate in the minds of the least refined what the condition of the Old Believer church was. One could say that excommunication in Alekseev's conception served the same function as sacred art did in imprinting the teachings of the church on the minds of the illiterate, or of the least cultured ones. The text of Alekseev's treatise is unfortunately available only from what Nil'sky quotes from it. If it were possible to consult the original text, it would be interesting to try and find out what other reasons, if any, Alekseev gave for keeping a distinction between married and unmarried Old Believers, and for not excommunicating all married Old Believers. In fact while it is possible, as we have seen, that Alekseev distinguished between more or less "enlightened" Old Believers, it is also true that by allowing some Old Believers to be married without being excommunicated he could have feared to give cause of scandal. Another reason for excommunicating some Old Believers and not others could be that Alekseev made a distinction between starozheny and novozheny, i.e., between Old Believers who had their marriage celebrated in a Nikonian church before conversion to the old faith, and Old Believers who had been married after they had been already enlightened on the true faith. To distinguish between starozheny and novozheny would have been fully in keeping with the views expressed by Feodosy Vasil'ev in his epistle to Andrey Denisov (73). There is also of course a

73 See chapter 2.

third possibility: namely that Alekseev did distinguish between starozheny and novozheny, and that in addition he also made some exceptions in favour of some novozheny. Alekseev's doctrines were condemned, as we have seen in the previous chapter, at the Polish council of 1751. At this council the Theodosians stated again vigorously the precept of universal chastity. Alekseev in turn took a strongly critical view of the decision of the Theodosians to exclude the novozheny from the sacrament of confession and their children from baptism (74).

Alekseev had clearly explained that he had envisaged a special sign of discrimination to mark the newlywed off from the rest of the community during prayers: "not for hate of the newly married ones, of marriage itself, but exclusively to keep alive the awareness that, though still members of our community, they have been united in a ceremony which is not canonical" (75). Par contre, the Theodosians had decided in favour of a total exclusion of novozheny from their community, to mark them off as heretics and vessels of Antichrist, and to preclude their attainment of personal salvation by excluding them from the only sacraments left to the priestless Old Believers, namely baptism and penance. The Theodosians remained "deaf and insensitive" to Alekseev's exhortations to a more humane and compassionate attitude: "The holy church not only did not expel those who had

74 Ivan Alekseev, chapter 'Otvét ko otvergayushchim ot pokayaniya novobrachnykh' of O tayne braka, quoted in Nil'sky, op.cit., p.167.

75 Ivan Alekseev, chapter 'Razglagol'stvié kratko k voprosyayushchim o razn'stvii suda v priyatii novovenchavshchikhsya brachno', from O tayne braka, quoted in I. Nil'sky, op.cit., p.162.

been married outside, but invited them and united them with its faithful, and made them confess and repent, christened their children, acknowledged the non-Christian partner of a couple, ordered the faithful to pray for the salvation of the unfaithful, and ordered the faithful spouse to come and pray in the church" (76). The Theodosians did not seem too concerned by Alekseev's charges of pitilessness: in about 1757/58 they excommunicated him and all novozheny from the Theodosian community (77). It was on this occasion that, as a retort, Alekseev wrote the already mentioned Slovo vozglasitel'noe na devstvennyi sobor priderzhashchiy zhen i dev, which he completed in 1759. Three years later, in 1762, he completed the treatise in which he fully expounded his beliefs, that O tayne braka (On the sacrament of marriage) from which extensive quotations have been made in the previous pages. Alekseev's opponents, for their part, did not hesitate to discredit him in rather dishonest fashion; some refused to take his ideas seriously, others went as far as gossiping that he was of a lascivious nature, and that he was addicted to alcohol (78). Alekseev apparently did not allow such attacks to demoralize him, and pursued unflinchingly his defence of married life, trying to get the priestless Old Believers to accept it, in order that more solidity should be given to the society and family life of the Old Believers. He never married,

76 Ivan Alekseev, chapter 'Otvét na otvergayushchiye...' quoted in Nil'sky, op.cit., p.167.

77 Nil'sky, op.cit., pp.172-173.

78 Ibid., p.132

as he pointed out in his treatise, but fought for his ideas "for the sake of the beauty and honour of our own church and the advantage of the people" and because, as he pointed out to those who used his relatively young age to undermine his arguments, "not every action or thought of an elderly person is in accordance with God's will" (79).

79 Ibid., p.133.

Chapter 4

The debate in Moscow and St.Petersburg.

(The foundation of Preobrazhenskoe and Kovylin)
Whereas in the previous chapters an attempt has been made to define the development and the terms of the question of marriage, from its first clear-cut formulation in 1694, to the split of 1708 between the Pomoryans and the Theodosians and later to the tentative solution of Ivan Alekseev, in the next two chapters the evolution of the two opposite conceptions of marriage of Pavel Onufrevich Lyubopytny (1773-1848) the one hand and Sergey Semenovich Gnusin will be discussed. At the background of these later developments one can see the social set-up of the Old Believers, which, particularly in the 1760s, underwent important modifications. These modifications can be summed up in one word: inurbation. Old Believer merchants emerged, who often disposed of considerable fortunes and had serfs and workers as their dependents. This phenomenon initially took place in Moscow. Before 1771 there were in Moscow about twenty families of Theodosians who had moved there from Novgorod. They led a clandestine religious life, and gathered only at night for collective prayers (1). They found an opportunity to strengthen their community, somewhat unexpectedly, in the plague which devastated Moscow and reached a peak of mortality in the summer

1 V.Vasil'ev, Organizatsiya i samoupravlenie, p.571.

The existence of the Theodosian, as opposed to the Pomoryan priestless Old Believers became known in Moscow in 1717, when Evstraat Feodoseevich spent three weeks as a guest in the house of a Pomoryan, refusing to share meals and prayers with him on account of the recent split of 1706. See P. Iustinov, 'Ryapinskii period', p.707. On the Old Believers in Moscow at the beginning of this century, see V.Makarov, 'Starobryadcheskaya Moskva'.

of 1771. "Moustapha ne pouvait donner que la peste dont son beau pays est toujours attaqué" was Voltaire's comment to Catherine (2). The reason why Moustapha was blamed was that in October 1768 Turkey had declared war on Russia; in the course of the hostilities the Russian army advanced towards the South, where cases of plague had been observed in 1769 in the areas closest to Turkey. In the spring of 1770 the Russian army registered the first losses due to the plague, and in the summer the plague began its advance northwards. Moscow was reached in November 1770, where the plague exploded in the spring of 1771 (3).

In September the mortality rate reached a level of 500-900 deaths a day, and there was widespread popular hostility towards the lazarets from which, it was rumoured, nobody emerged alive (4).

The superstitious Moscow populace, in the general breakdown, believed the plague to be a God-sent punishment, and that it could be averted only if the icon of the Godloving Virgin were provided with a new, precious silver oklad. To this end money was collected; Archbishop Amvrosy, the Metropolitan of Moscow who

2 Voltaire to Catherine II, 12 November 1771, B.16397

3 On the Turko-Russian war see I. de Madariaga, Russia in the age of Catherine the Great, pp.187-236. On the plague, see J.T. Alexander, Bubonic Plague in Early Modern Russia, pp.61,67,80-86,118.

4 J.T. Alexander, op.cit., p.178

had feared that the collection of money, encouraging human contact, might lead to increasing contagion, was murdered by a frenzied crowd on September 15. The popular uprising which resulted in the murder of the Archbishop became known as the "plague riot" (chumnyi bunt): "Un petit supplement à l'article fanatisme" suggested Catherine to Voltaire who in his turn commented: "Depuis la mort du Fils de la Sante Vierge, il n'y a presque point eu de jour ou quelq'un n'ait été assassiné à son occasion"(5).

Yet this was an example of Orthodox fanaticism and superstition. Whatever the allegations by Nikonian authors, it seems most unlikely that the Old Believers were responsible for Amvrosy's murder (6).

5 Catherine to Voltaire, 6-17 October 1771, B.16361; Voltaire to Catherine, 18 November 1771, B.16409. On the plague riot, see J.T.Alexander, op.cit., pp.192-201. On Amvrosy's death, see D. Bantysh-Kamensky, Zhizn' preosvyashchennago Amvrosiya, Moscow, 1813.

6 The Governor-General of Moscow, P.S.Saltykov, who had fled from the city the day before the uprising, and P.Eropkin, who took his place, both believed that the raskol'niki had instigated the uprising. Yet neither the Synod nor the Moscow consistory, which could both be expected not to miss an opportunity to attack the Old Believers, mention their responsibility. See J.T. Alexander, op.cit., pp.197-198, and Vedenie Pravitel'stvuyuschchemu Senatu ot svyateyshago Sinoda, pp.293-295; and Zhurnal Moskovskoy Konsistorii quoted in N.Rozanov, Istoriya Moskovskogo eparkhial'nogo upravleniya, p.77. D. Bantysh-Kamensky, in the quoted biography of his uncle, does not blame the Old Believers for the murder, but later on the wake of anti-Old Believers literature such as Murav'ev's Raskol oblichayemy svoeyu istorieyu of 1857, he adopted this view in an article in Chernigovskie Eparkhial'nye izvestiya, 1862, pp.15-16. See Rozanov, op.cit., p.37, n.167. In the context of this concerted

They were otherwise engaged, negotiating with the authorities to open their own quarantine station and cemeteries. The local authorities, when mortality reached a peak in September 1771, felt they were no longer able to cope with the situation; on September 1, the Governor General Eropkin appealed to private initiative for the organization of special lazarets (7). On 7 September 1771 members of the Moscow Senate met representatives of the Moscow merchants, among whom, apparently unknown to them, were priestly and priestless Old Believers. A group of priestless Old Believers, figuring as representatives of the Moscow merchants, requested permission to buy or build near the Preobrazhenskoe wall a quarantine station, and promised that the task would be entrusted to worthy people, and that they would keep control of the sick so as to avoid contagion; they asked to be exempted from medical inspection and be placed under Eropkin's personal supervision.

On 14 September the Old Believers were granted permission to set up their own lazarets, but they were not exempted from medical inspections which were to take place twice a week. The priestless Old Believers thus founded their community which, called the

attack on the Old Believers, one can see an indirect accusation of them in the fact that in the last leaf of a tract against them, I.T.Pososhkov's Zerkalo na raskol'nikov oblichenie of 1709, somebody copied later the text of the inscription on the gravestone of Amvrosy - see TsGADA, fond.196 Mazurin op.1, mss.379 f.217v.

7 For the text of the ukaz, see N.Popov, Sbornik, p.64.

Preobrazhenskoe cemetery, quickly became the most important Theodosian centre, a position which it retains to this day (8). After the plague was over, the wooden buildings quickly erected in 1771 were replaced by stone ones, and the Theodosians made sure that their community was given a firm foundation.

In 1792 the Governor General of Moscow, Prince A.A. Prozorovsky, reported to Catherine II that in Preobrazhenskoe there was a stone chapel, surrounded by many stone houses in which the priestless Old Believers kept more than a thousand people. In 1801 a second domestic chapel was opened in the male section, and in 1805 six stone buildings, each with a domestic chapel inside, were erected in the female section; all of them had been planned by the prominent architect Mikhail Fedorovich Kazakov (10). One of the leading Moscow Theodosians was at the time Il'ya Alekseev Kovylin (1731-1809). His signature figures among those appended to the petition to Eropkin.

8 N. Popov, op.cit., pp.77-78. The petition was presented by the 'Moskovskie kuptsy i pritom raznochintsy zapisavshiesya v dvoynoy oklad'. There are 25 signatures appended to the petition, the last one being Kovylin's. After the two Old Believer cemeteries of Rogozhskoe (for the priestly Old Believers) and Preobrazhenskoe, a Lutheran and a Catholic cemetery were established in 1772. See J.T.Alexander, op.cit., pp.181,274.

9 TsGADA, fond.163,no.26, report of A.A.Prozorovsky to Catherine II of 25 October 1762; see also V. Vasil'ev, op.cit., p.572; A.F. Shafonsky, Opisanie morovoy yazvy, p.89; M.I.Chuvanov, 'Preobrazhenskomu kladbishchu'.

Kovylin had been born in the village of Pistsovo, on the Nerekhotsky uezd of the guberniya of Kostroma (10). He had been baptized into the Orthodox Church. What Kovylin's social status was is not quite clear; in the already mentioned petition to Eropkin of 7 September 1771 he signs himself as a serf of Prince Aleksey Borisovich Golitsyn (11).

But it seems that already by then he was profitably engaged in the manufacture of bricks; in 1805 it was he who provided the bricks for the buildings planned by Kazakov. The probably analogous story of another brickmaker of peasant origins can help to elucidate Kovylin's own career. The serf in question, a certain Zinovy Ponomarev, who belonged to the wife of General M.I.Golovin, received from Prince N.M.Golitsyn in 1781 a letter of authority which allowed him to buy and administer a kiln. As was typical in such cases, the serf did not buy the kiln in the name of his mistress, but of another owner, in other words, Ponomarev chose the protection of a big name, which would inspire respect and consideration in the officials. Besides, being under the protection of Golitsyn, Ponomarev could

10 Kratkiya zamechaniya, 1863, f.21. On Kovylin's birthplace, see I.F.Tokmakov, Istoriko-statisticheskoe opisanie sela Pistsovo - the village was at 35 versts from Ivanovo-Voznezensk, the famous centre of the textile industry, and until 1812 it had an equally prosperous manufacturing industry. Most Old Believers in the village were Theodosians. Tokmakov (p.2) mentions Kovylin as one of its most prominent natives, but his allegation that Kovylin became a Theodosian after marrying a Theodosian woman is poorly grounded, based as it is on a talk delivered in Kiev in 1868 by a Moscow edinoverets, A. Sorokin.

11 N. Popov, Sbornik, p.78.

safely assume that his mistress would never have dared to claim her rights. A rich protector like Golitsyn was a good choice also because his wealth made it unlikely that he would have tried to exploit the serf in a petty way. In fact in his letter of authority Golitsyn granted to Ponomarev full freedom in the administration of the *кѣно*. Ponomarev soon became one of the most important brick producers, and sold his products both to his protector Golitsyn and to his nominal mistress, Golovina (12).

Kovylin's own conversion to the Old Faith went as follows: in Moscow, in fact in the region of Preobrazhenskoe, Theodosian Old Believers had already been noticed by the Synod in the 1740s, among some merchant families. In particular, there was a certain Semen Savel'ev who preached against marriage and administered

12 See N.F.Voronov, "Moskovskie kirpichnye zavody," Moscow, 1957, pp. 403-406; at pp. 566-608 Voronov lists the brick furnaces operating in 1770-80; a Il'ya Alekseev is mentioned, who could be Kovylin. For another career of a serf, see also V.D. Barkov, Istoriya V.D. Barkova, St. Petersburg, 1902. Authors hostile to Kovylin have tried to discredit him with the story of how he was once caught red-handed while cheating a distinguished customer. See N. Popov, Materialy dlya istorii, 1870, p.4; F.V. Livanov, Raskol'niki i ostrozhniki, vol. III, 1872, p.7 - Livanov takes his version from A.I. Zhuravlev, Polnoe istoricheskoe Izvestie, 1799.

rebaptism by immersion in the waters of a pond (13). One night in 1760 Kovylin was, as usual, resting after work by his brick furnace in the company of another merchant, a cloth-producer, named Fedor Anikin Zen'kov (1721-1726). The factory was close to the Kopylov's pond, on the Moscow Vedenskie gory and the curiosity of Kovylin and Zen'kov was aroused when they saw some people being immersed in the waters of the pond (14). They stopped to inquire and learnt that they had witnessed the ceremony of rebaptism in the old faith administered by Il'ya Ivanov (1691-1771), a Theodosian peasant born in the Yaroslav guberniya, who had moved to Moscow where he exercised moral authority over the Theodosian community (15). This is how, according to tradition, Kovylin first heard about the old faith and the schism in the Russian church; some years later, in 1768, he asked Il'ya Ivanov to baptise him too. Zen'kov, who had been baptised before Kovylin, placed his house at the disposal of his coreligionists to hold meetings and discuss common matters until 1771. Il'ya Ivanov had taken up lodgings in his house, where he gave spiritual guidance to Zenkov's sister, Feodosiya Anisimova. Eventually Kovylin, Zenkov and his sister took over from Ivanov the direction of the religious offices, which were held in a

13 ODDS, vol.26, St.Petersburg, 1903, n.202, 11 July 1746, pp.323-326

14 Sinitsyn, Istoriya Preobrazhenskogo kladbishcha, p.6

15 On Il'ya Ivanov, see Lyubopytny, op.cit, pp.131-132

private chapel inside Zen'kov's house. Baptisms and burial services were performed there, as for rebaptisms of adults, they were celebrated in the Khapilov pond at night. Then came the great opportunity of 1771, which besides offering the occasion to found Preobrazhenskoe yielded many conversions to the Old Faith. Apparently Kovylin would preach to the panic-stricken Muscovites that the plague was a just punishment inflicted by God for having abandoned the faith of their pious ancestors, and for the persecution of the Old Believers who had not betrayed the old doctrines and the old traditions: "Look how God has taken up arms against his enemies, transgressors of Orthodoxy, salt-pinchers [shchepotniki (this is how the Old Believers referred to the sign of the cross with three fingers)] and how he punishes them. How can the Holy Ghost descend on them, when their beards are shaven, thus dishonouring the icon of God". Assistance to the sick was constantly accompanied by celebrations of services in the old rite, presided over by Kovylin himself.

It was particularly appreciated by people who heard about Preobrazhenskoe that corpses received a proper burial, with all religious honours, instead of being thrown in a common grave as was done in other lazarets. Besides, people were particularly well looked after and fed. Whenever a recovery took place, it would be attributed to the power of the old liturgies (16). To

16 Sinitsyn, op.cit., pp.6-8

those who sought refuge in Preobrazhenskoe, Kovylin explained that the marriages celebrated by Nikonian priests were nothing but lechery (blud) and that they would be punished by eternal flames. If once the plague was over, the lazaret was not dismantled, this may have been due to Kovylin's connections and "bribing-power". Be that as it may, no sooner was the plague over than Kovylin and his coreligionists devoted all their energies to give the community a firmer basis. All Kovylin's horses were put to good use to transport from his factory the bricks necessary to turn into masonry the building hastily erected at the time of emergency, and also to transport within the walls of the cemetery the valuable properties and belongings bequeathed to the community by its deceased members (17). Until his death in 1809 Kovylin stood at the head of the Preobrazhenskoe community. In the last year of his life, he succeeded in giving a firm foundation to Preobrazhenskoe by having it recognized officially as a charitable house. On 23 December 1808 Kovylin petitioned Tsar Alexander and requested the official denomination of "Charitable house of Preobrazhenskoe established for the benefit of the Old Believers", full independence from the ecclesiastical authorities and sole subjection to the police's supervision, no limitations in the number of guests, the permission to bring up and educate orphaned minors until the age of seventeen, and to call them "Old Believer wards", the recognition of the wardens and of the properties bequeathed by Kovylin to Preobrazhenskoe for a value of 50,000

17 Ibid., pp.9-13.

rubles and a yearly income of 6,000 rubles, and in general the right to accept donations (18). Thanks to the contacts in St.Petersburg of another Theodosian, Efim Grachev (19), the request was granted on 15 May 1809 (20).

Kovylin's authority was partly due to the vast amount of capital at his disposal. By the time of his death, he owned a cloth mill, some brick kilns, a pottery, he had a ship-building factory, owned innumerable books, icons, manuscripts, documents and costumes, as well as a spacious house and a rich

18 Y.A.Kovylin, Proshchenie and Plan. Gnusin, a Theodosian who had great influence on Kovylin, discouraged him from petitioning for Preobrazhenskoe to be called "bogadelenny dom Aleksandrovskii": see Nikanor, 'Gnusin', p.401. P.G.Ryndzyunsky (Gorodskoe grazhdanstvo, p.463) writes that there are two versions of the plan: the one printed in N.I.Popov, Materialy, with 100 signatures and a longer one with 900 signatures. On philanthropic activities under Alexander I, see J.Cohen Zacek, 'The imperial Philanthropic Society'.

19 See Stepanov, 'Krestyane-fabrikanty Grachevy', p.243. For examples of Grachev's intervention in favour of Preobrazhenskoe, see TsGIA, fond 1284, op.195, no.3, Delo po zhalobe popechiteley moskovskikh staroobryadtsev Gracheva i Zaikina o zashchite sekty ikh ot pritesneni dukhovenstva, ff.1-5.

20 See N.I.Popov, Materialy, pp.67-68, and P.G.Ryndzyunsky, op.cit., pp.455-478. See N.Varadinov, Istoriya Ministerstva vnutrennikh del, vol.8, pp.60-61 and Sobranie postanovleniy po chasti raskola, 1818, pp.35-56 on the resolution of 15 May 1809, by which Preobrazhenskoe acquired the rights of all other private charitable institutions, namely to dispose and administer its capitals, offer shelter and assistance to people, act as a juridical person and elect its own administrators and representatives in front of the law. Metropolitan Filaret of Moscow in 1865 claimed that Alexander I never saw the project in which the Old Believers were explicitly mentioned in connection with Preobrazhenskoe, and argued that, like any other charitable institution, the properties of Preobrazhenskoe belonged to the Imperial Philanthropic society. See L.Brodsky, Iz nenapechatannykh mneniy, pp.33-37.

private chapel(21). It has been suggested that Kovylin's capital was of crucial importance in assisting fugitive peasants in their first steps towards urbanization, as well as providing the money necessary for bribing the authorities in favour of the Old Believers. Some of Kovylin's connections are indeed impressive. Prince G.A.Potemkin was one of the grandees with whom Kovylin most liked to claim familiarity; he related for instance to Feodor Anikin Zen'kov that "there are also people of a high station in life who deign to give me their attention. Once

21 It is not quite clear what the legal arrangements concerning the properties were. From Kratkiya zamechaniya, 1863 it would appear that Kovylin owned his properties in his own name and was able to dispose of them. Kovylin's severity in matters of faith inside the Old Believer community was notorious but in business he actually did not refrain from employing assistants of other faiths; he even bequeathed some of his property to them. At his death, icons, books, manuscripts, documents of various kinds, and clothes went to the cemetery. His furnaces went to his assistants Osip Il'in Milovanov and Nikon Matveev Gusarev; these buildings, an Old Believer told me, have recently been identified and are being studied for their architectural interest. His pottery went to his assistant Andrey Eleazarov. His own house and the cloth mill were bequeathed to his assistant Yakov Sergeev Matveev, who dealt for him with administrative and judiciary matters and was a member of the dominant church. The latter disposition was not approved of by the other Preobrazhenskoe elders, who were sorry to see Kovylin's house and the chapel which was inside it end in Nikonian hands. They solved the situation by making the Theodosian merchant Ivan Mikhailovich Stukachev buy the house from Matveev. Stukachev and his two sons administered it until 1812; after that date, the chapel was handed over to the female section of Preobrazhenskoe, while the house remained in Stukachev's name until 1820, when it became the property of the cemetery. The transfer of property was made possible after the recognition in 1809 of Preobrazhenskoe as a charitable house. All the above facts are, according to the Kratkiya zamechaniya, ff.18-v, completely misrepresented by S.Sinitsyn, who denies that Preobrazhenskoe ever attained the status of Charitable house.

I was in Piter [St. Petersburg], and I happened to be a guest at General Potemkin's who told me: 'Il'ya! well learned that you are, be contented with that, and do not propagate the beliefs of your sect! And I in response bowed to him and answered, 'Thank you, batyushka, for your good advice!'"(22). It is said that he also paid his respects to Catherine II whom he presented with sumptuous gifts, and addressed as "true Mother of the Fatherland"; some Old Believers used this episode to accuse him of hypocrisy, as Kovylin was adamant in refusing to offer prayers for the Imperial Family (23). A story has it that during Paul I's reign he once presented a state official with a pie stuffed with golden coins. Paul I had ordered the closing down of the Preobrazhenskoe community; to avert the implementation of the order, Kovylin went twice to St.Petersburg, but it was all in vain. As a last resort, he, together with another Old Believer, O.I.Milovanov, presented the Moscow Chief of Police, who was responsible for the carrying out of the order, with a big pie, stuffed with a thousand appetizing silver rubles, or "imperialy" (24). In Alexander I's time, he enjoyed the protection of the Minister of the Interior Prince Aleksey Borisovich Kurakin (1807-1810), to whom he had been introduced by the court-tailor, a certain Zelenkov and by the contractor Avram Yakovlevich Yakovlev; Kurakin recommended him to General Tutolmin, the

22 A.Vishnyakov, 'Novozheny i brakobortsy', p.107.

23 See Otvet bezpopovtsam feodosevtsam, ff.48v-49. On the question of prayers for the Imperial family, see below.

24 The story is told by Sinitsyn, op.cit., p.15 - In Kratkiye zamechaniya 1.13, the story is denied.

Military Governor of Moscow (25). With Tutolmin he succeeded in establishing a friendly relationship. Kovylin was confident enough with him to allow himself some practical jokes. Once, for instance, having entertained Tutolmin in his house together with the chief of Police, he had a good laugh at them by making the one sit in the coach of the other, so that they found themselves at each other's houses (26).

A Theodosian who in 1820 was employed by the government as a spy provided this explanation of Kovylin's authority:

"In his time he was well known all over Moscow, and held in great esteem by his sect. He was reputed and popular not on account of his capital, but of his happy disposition, his talent, his eloquence and his being well informed on spiritual and civil matters. He had a knack for conversation, so that he became acquainted with magnates, to whom he had easy access, and with Senators with whom he dealt on a friendly basis, with chiefs of Police with whom he entertained comradely relationships, with mayors and non-commissioned police officers and other such by whom he was respected as if he were their master. It is true that he loved money, but most of all he liked to be treated with respect and the honour due to him in whatever circumstance he happened to be. On matters concerning the civil laws, he did not spare money: whenever he entered an office where justice was administered [sudebnye mesta], everybody hurried to pay homage and bow to him, and he would go around holding to his chest a wallet well stocked with banknotes. A bulging purse full of ten rubles notes, and in his pockets silver roubles for any need which might present itself. Whenever something happened of concern to the community, or himself, or some other Theodosian,... then Il'ya Aleekseevich would sprinkle the eyes of justice with money, would shut

25 Sinitsyn, op.cit., pp.19-20. V.Vasil'ev, op.cit., p.580, writes instead that Kovylin was introduced to Kurakin by the St.Petersburg Theodosian Kostsov.

26 Sinitsyn, op.cit., pp.27-29, 18-19. In Kratkiya zamechaniya these stories about Kovylin are all denied.

things up with balls and banquets, would defend his case with horses, cows, calves, milk, sour cream and other such presents, as it would be proper to offer: he was a man with a fox's tail and wolf's teeth" (27).

It would appear that Kovylin was the most prominent member, socially and economically, of the Theodosian community of Preobrazhenskoe. It was only natural he should have his way in shaping according to his beliefs the organization of the Preobrazhenskoe compound; and he, the khozyain, or "boss" as they called him, had very strict ideas on how he wanted it all to be (28). Lyubopytny wrote that Kovylin had a most rare knowledge of the Holy Scriptures and of the liturgical books, which he knew by heart and wanted to be observed to the letter, that he was talented, courageous, enterprising and full of pious zeal, formidable and strong-willed in the upholding of his views, utterly and selflessly devoted to the cause of his church, its edification and growth. Besides, his eloquence was striking, his memory excellent, his clear and pleasant manner in the exposition of his most deeply felt convictions captivated and persuaded all who listened to him.

27 See TsGIA, fond 834, op.2, no.1666 - Fakty, kasayushchiya raskola, ff.92v-93, 15/11/1820, concerning Preobrazhenskoe in 1816. Lyubopytny (Istoricheskiy slovar', p.132) has words of praise for Kovylin because he used his connections to protect all Old Believers, not just Theodosians. It has also been alleged that Dostoevsky's father knew Kovylin personally and became a hospital doctor thanks to his intervention: see I.K.Bykovskyi, Preobrazhenskiy prikhod, p.19.

28 I.Nil'sky, Semeynaya zhizn', p.275. Kovylin's influence was so strong on his coreligionists, that in 1817 Bishop Antony of Kaluga defined the priestless Old Believers as belonging to the "vera Il'i Alekseevicha": TsGIA, fond.1473, op.1 no.2, f.223, report to A.N. Golitsyn, 20 April 1817.

But, as Lyubopytny regrets, all his magnificent talents were spent to the benefit of the brakobortsy (marriage breakers) and this, wrote Lyubopytny indignantly, went hand in hand with his love of a splendid and luxurious way of life, and his inclination to immorality in the satisfaction of his bodily needs. All were struck and intimidated by his looks; his was the aplomb of a man of rank and weight, tall, handsome, with a long white face, a cheerful, lively and penetrating expression, the beard broad and thick, long, curly, adorned by grey streaks: "to look once at him was enough to realize that there was a patriarch of the church, and a master in this world" (29). Catherine Wilmot who with her sister Martha was a guest of Princess Dashkova between 1803 and 1808, went to visit Preobrazhenskoe in 1807. She also left her impression of him, which although partially erroneous - Kovylin was not a serf of the Dolgoruky - is nevertheless worth mentioning:

"...The princess has enter'd most goodnaturedly into our wish of rummaging for Russia in this country; and as the Merchants and Peasants still preserve their ancient practices she order'd a Russian Entertainment in the House of Elic Alexovitch (i.e. Kovylin P.G.P.) who is a sort of Patriarch to the sect of Roskolnics. This man was born the subject of the Dolgorukys but purchased his Liberty for L.2000 Sterling, and is one of the richest Merchants in Moscow. He is quite a portrait of the perfection of Human Nature at the advanced age of 80; simple and cheerful, active and benevolent with the most beautiful features and Silver Beard on a magnificent height of stature render'd more striking by his ancient Russian attire. In his capacity of Sectarian he amused me more than in that of Merchant, as a gigantic dinner was its only symbol; but as Sectarian he conducted us to his Churches & Hospitals & Convents & Monasterys which surround his dwelling in a very considerable circle. He explained many of the peculiaritys of his calling, the

29 Lyubopytny, Istoricheski slovar', pp.132-133.

object of which (in common with the Catholics & Greeks) is unpolitical because it is to shut up his fellow creatures in perpetual confinement & uselessness to the industry of the State. There are as many branches here amongst the Sectarians as in England, & amongst them one who makes it a Duty to procure amongst themselves a first born Male Child of a Woman who has never been married & to drink its blood, & eat its flesh at the Sacrament! Lord help us! how very seldom one is recompensed for a spirit of examination in any other way than the discovery of some new monument of human folly!" (30).

Kovylin, as we have seen, was a born leader and man who could not easily accept submission to others; what he set out to establish was a community which could vie with Vyg in importance and influence and become a centre for the Theodosians to stand up against the prestige of the Pomoryans. Vyg never claimed monastic status, to which it was not canonically entitled, but nevertheless adopted a monastic ideal and pattern of organization. This is what Kovylin also did in Preobrazhenskoe. As befitted a monastery, all property in Preobrazhenskoe was held in common. The first nucleus of the community's capital was formed by putting together the donations offered in 1771 by the plague-stricken Muscovites. Kovylin strongly advised all the new converts who sought admission to the community to surrender all their belongings before rebaptism in the old faith and discouraged them from claiming them back (31). Kovylin himself had sacrificed in all 300,000 rubles of his property: but then, being the nastoyatel', he preserved control over the administration of the community and over its economy. Communion

30 The Russian Journal of Martha and Catherine Wilmot 1803-1808, p.248. See also A.Cross ed., Russia under Western eyes, p.33 and a portrait of Kovylin in illustration n.9.

31 V.Vasil'ev, op.cit., p.578; Sinitsyn, op.cit., pp.14,9; A.I. Zhuravlev, op.cit., p.134.

of property and monastic rules were deemed essential to ensure the stability and the cohesion of the institution (32).

The monastic character of the organization was also expressed in the uniformity of the dress of its members. The women wore caftans of a particular cut, sarafans of black nankeen, covered their heads with black scarfs and went about holding rosaries in their hands. The men wore caftans trimmed with black cloth, with three pleats on the bodice, eight buttons on the front; these garments were not as such typically monastic, but were regarded as being traditionally Russian as well as suggestive of a monastery in their colour (33). Another monastic feature was the strictly ecclesiastical repartition of time inside the community; at a signalling, a stroke on the iron board hanging by the chapel, all assembled to pray; in the chapel all religious services were performed in good order, without leaving out any section of the liturgical day. After the main service all went singing to the refectory, where the nastavnik recited the prescribed prayers and all made their prostrations on the ground, after which all could sit at the assigned places at the common table. During the meals silence was observed, while the life of the saint of the day was read from the menology (34). Men and women lived in two different sections which were separated from each other by crenellated walls, which can still be seen to this day,

32 Sinitsyn, op.cit., p.17; P.O.Lyubopytny, op.cit., pp.132.

33 Sinitsyn, op.cit., pp.13,17; Nil'sky, op.cit., p.206; A.I. Zhuravlev, op.cit., p.134.

34 V. Vasil'ev, op.cit., p.546.

with their characteristic towers at the corners. Inside each section there were chapels for common worship and bell towers with two bells each (35). In the men's section, there lived the nastoyatel' and the nastavniki; it also housed the general office of the community and a building for the production of candles. Each section had its separate chapel and iconostasis. Marriage was of course forbidden, but in spite of this prohibition there were in Preobrazhenskoe offspring, who were referred to as the vospitanniki (wards) of Il'ya Alekseevich Kovylin.

A special asylum was built for their education and upbringing.

There they were also taught to read and write, to sing and all that was required for a proper upbringing. Other buildings of importance in the economic life of the community were located outside its walls: sheds, stables, storehouses, a farm-yard and the guardroom at the entrance gates. Eventually, during and after Kovylin's lifetime, many more private buildings were erected around the cemetery by the Preobrazhenskoe Old Believers. In the end they formed a whole new suburb, which came to be known as Grachevskaya sloboda from the name of Efim Grachev who succeeded Kovylin as nastoyatel' of the community (36).

(Family life and the prohibition of marriage)
Kovylin, simply because he was a Theodosian, did not recognize any form of marriage and opposed vigorously any attempt to find some form of canonical recognition for family life. He chose for

35 Sinitsyn, Probrzhenskoe i okruzhayushchiya ego mesta, p.135; Vasil'ev, op.cit., p.573. See illustrations nn.7-8,10.

36 V. Vasil'ev, op.cit., pp.573-575. See also Sinitsyn, op.cit., p. 14, and p.21 where an estimate of Probrzhenskoe's population in the 1840s, is given as follows: five hundred stable inhabitants and three thousand regular worshippers.

the Preobrazhenskoe community a statute which ruled out the possibility of married life. This statute consisted of the 1751 Polish rules complemented by twenty five conditions to be subscribed to by the new converts who wanted to be accepted in the Theodosian faith (37). The latter, called Chin oglasheniya vkhodyashchim v pravoslavnuyu veru, disposed that a convert was to submit to an interrogation concerning his previous walk in life; whether he be a free man, or a serf, or if he engaged in trade or agriculture. If the convert was a merchant, or an artisan, he would be questioned to make sure that he was not engaged in any trade incompatible with the Christian faith, such as the production or sale of games, of tobacco, of cards, that he paid all taxes and that he did not in any way break the law. If he was a peasant, he would be asked if he belonged to a landlord, and if he was a runaway serf, if Christians were subjected to persecution where he lived, and if so, the rule was to accept him only if it was felt that, if need be, he would be capable of resisting persecution without bringing shame onto

37 The reports on the adoption of the Preobrazhenskoe statute are so different that it is difficult to assess their value. Sinitsyn, in an account rejected in Kratkiye zamechaniya, claims that Kovylin was not aware of a division among Pomoryans and Theodosians and for this reason he adopted the Vyg statute (p.16), that later Kovylin became increasingly dissatisfied with Vyg, and adopted the Polish rules, the text of which he received from a Theodosian, Petr Fedorov, whom he had sent to Poland in 1777. This story is also reported by Vasil'ev, op.cit, p.577. N. Popov (Materialy, pp.46-49) adds to the confusion by printing together under the heading of Predlozheniya Kovylina documents pertaining to different authors and times.

the Old Faith (38).

A married convert would be asked if his marriage was in accordance with the law, and notified that even in that case he would be expected to live with his wife without sexual intercourse; if he had children, he would be expected to make sure they too convert to the true faith. Parents who allowed their children to marry would be excommunicated, and refused readmission unless they succeeded in persuading their children to give up their marriage. Converts were also warned to beware of Satan's messengers, who in the Last Days would "penetrate the houses of Christians, seduce women of little faith whispering to them, like the snake to Eve, that it is possible to celebrate marriage"; but in front of such messengers from the devil one must "shut one's ears, and run away" and "not even listen to their first words, lest one be captured in their evil nets of perdition: for if their words are soft and pleasing more than balm, they are in reality arrows which murder the soul" (39).

38 Chin oglasheniya, pp.83-87. The Preobrazhenskoe rules of acceptance follow the pattern fixed by the fifth century monastic rule of Basil of Caesarea. According to these, all could become monks with the exception of runaway serfs. Emperor Justinian I enacted that all monasteries were to follow the Basilian pattern. See S.Runciman, The Byzantine Theocracy, p.114. Incidentally, in Yankovich de Mirjevo's Sokrashchennyi katikhizis (St.Petersburg, 1785, p.38), the eighth commandment is interpreted in such a way as to cover the case of unlawful sheltering of fugitive serfs. To hide a serf is presented as being tantamount to theft.

39 Chin oglasheniya, rules 6-8, pp.87-90

Unmarried converts would be informed that because of the extinction of priesthood marriages could not be celebrated - therefore only converts who felt strong enough to pursue a life of chastity could be accepted. Those who wanted to marry in spite of the prohibition would be excommunicated and denied on point of death both confession and a funeral. The rules were particularly severe in the case of Christians who had married when already in the old faith, for their marriage had been concluded going "against their conscience in complete disregard of their baptism"; for if discontinuance of the marital union was expected from those who had been married before baptism, all the more reason to deal severely with those who, following erroneous theories, had not hesitated to defile the holiness of baptism by an uncanonical marriage. They should not be accepted in the Theodosian community, for they would be a poor acquisition indeed: a "cause of futility and sowing of bad weeds", for their reasoning is intended as an attempt at concealing oneself from God, and not to acknowledge the guilt of sin. Theodosians judged therefore that people of a Pomoryan frame of mind would not be likely to repent, and make use of the sacrament of confession instead of the missing sacrament of marriage. Threateningly, it was intimated that sins committed after baptism would be doubly punished because they had been committed in a state of, as it were, heightened awareness. The denomination of Christian alone would not have been enough to be saved, for "without the practice of a Christian way of life a dead faith alone cannot save". New converts would also be expected not to be in communion with people of other faith, with excommunicated

Christians and novozheny, and especially with parents of children who had been allowed to marry and even with their own close relatives if they went against the faith, though no effort was to be spared in order to put them again on the right path. Nikonian churches could not be visited for any reason, not even if they happened to house the relics of Orthodox Saints; icons which had been painted against the rules were not to be honoured (40).

A monastic community is not an institution capable of providing for marriage. Yet, traditionally, monasteries were the ideal places for sinners to repent and seek forgiveness. It was a sharp contrast between the ascetism and self-discipline of the monks, and the sins of those who came to repent. In the particular circumstances of a Christianity left without a church, with only

40 Ibid., rules 9-16, pp.90-94 The remaining rules dealt with matters of acceptable behaviour during festivities, of dress and hairstyles, travel, prayer and fasting.

the sacraments of baptism and confession, the ingenuity of the priestless Old Believers consisted in enlarging the functional scope of confession so that it would in a way take the place of marriage and relieve the soul from the consequences of sin. The most articulate expression of this system, as it will be seen in a next chapter, can be found in S.S.Gnusin. Interestingly enough, the result of this increased importance of the sacrament of confession was a return to certain characteristic features of Old Russian piety. As S.I.Smirnov has explained in his excellent study, the dukhovnyy otets (spiritual father, the pneumatikos pater of the Greek church), had enormous influence, far more than the ordinary parish priest, over individual Christians. The spiritual father had pastoral and disciplinary powers of which he made use without many concessions to human convenience. The most renowned spiritual fathers would not hesitate to be at their strictest with the powerful of this world. They would take under their guidance their spiritual children, the members of their "penitential family" (pokayal'naya sem'ya), from adolescence or even from childhood, would guide them throughout their lives and impose on them a strict regime of fasting and abstinence for the regulation of the two most powerful of the human instincts. Besides, the spiritual father was in certain situations more influential than the civil officer, as he could exercise his authority on matters in which the law was impotent or silent

(41). What influence the Spiritual Fathers had was seen at the time of the schism; when it came to the choice between old and new rituals, Christians would follow the prescriptions of their fathers. Avvakum, for instance, exercised enormous authority over his spiritual children, and kept them faithful to the old faith. Among the priestless Old Believers, as Smirnov observes, the spiritual father completely took over the functions of the parish priest, and the spiritual benefits of the Eucharist were substituted by those of fasting (42). In Preobrazhenskoe, as in all priestless Old Believers communities, salvation lay in the hands of the spiritual fathers. Kovylin, the undisputed leader of Preobrazhenskoe until his death in 1809, put great emphasis on the saving powers of penance. He was not a spiritual father himself, in fact he was fully involved in the affairs of this world and in the successful business ventures which enabled him to protect and support Preobrazhenksoe.

But he left the task of expressing his religious beliefs to Sergey Semenovich Gnusin, the nastavnik of the female section of Preobrazhenskoe, and a prolific writer. In Kovylin's surviving writings, it is mainly the man of action, the competent

41 S.I. Smirnov, Drevne-Russkii dukhovnik, pp.165-180.

42 Ibid., chapter 7, 'Russkie dukhovniki i raskol staroobryadstva', pp.205-241. Disobedience to a dukhovnyi otets was considered one of the worst sins (p.45).

administrator and leader who emerges (43).

In 1808, one year before his death, Kovylin attempted a summing up of his views in Razsmotrenie, which he sent to the St. Petersburg Theodosians (44). This is not a refined work, but one which conveys powerfully the apocalyptic dark vision of Kovylin. Kovylin's is a vision of sin and repentance, unfolded in what could be called an outline of the history of sin, starting with the first one, the rebellion of Lucifer. The sin of the first man resulted in Adam losing God's image in him, and turning into a beast, dominated no longer by divine reason, but by "bestial instincts" (45). In Kovylin's dark vision, because the reason on Man has become corrupted after the original sin, Man is prone to be misled by the devil, and there is only one way left to achieve salvation, namely to acknowledge the weakness of human reason, that free will is only a delusion, and that all Man can do to save himself is to obey God's prescriptions and repent of his sins if, overcome by temptation, "for a time he has wanted fornication". Christians who, "for the sake of fornication"

43 See, e.g., Pis'mo...Petru Fedorovu v Pomor'e, of 1777; his letters to the Filipponians, Predlozhenie feodoseevtsev pomortsam o soedinenii v odno soglasii and Predlozhenie Il'ii Alekseeva Kovyлина pomortsam ili ispovedanie, both in N.Popov, Materialy, 1870, pp.38-49; his petition to Alexander I, Proshenie Il'i Alekseeva Kovyлина in N.Popov, op.cit., pp.55-59, and chapter 23 of the Kniga otecheskoe zaveshchanie, ff.201-202, in which Kovylin objects to the novozheny.

44 I.A.Kovylin, Razsmotrenie, kto ot sotvorennoy tvari pache vsekh sogreshil, na nebesi i na zemli, pp.68-88.

45 Ibid., p.142

[bluda radi], delude themselves in believing in the legitimacy of marriage in the Last Days, by doing so recognize the power of Antichrist and will end up "in a sea of fire". Men can think themselves guided by good intentions, but lust causes them to fall; "the last generation will be captured by means of fornication". The novozheny renounce God's kingdom, and choose instead "foul fornication". (46).

To Kovylin apostasy seems far worse than sin, because through apostasy Antichrist captures men into his nets and turns sinners, who could still place their hope in God's forgiveness, into self righteous apostates, into heretics who, believing themselves to live virtuously, can no longer save themselves by an act of repentance: "and you, in your insanity, confuse the sinner with the apostate, the light with the dark, the devil with man; likewise in your apostate marriages you unite in one flesh man and devil; likewise with your baptism unite an infant with the devil. Insane and darkened in your mind, everywhere you confuse light and darkness". The novozheny have rebelled against the Holy Scriptures, and have sided with "lustful fornicators, with Mammon for the pleasures of man, and have obfuscated themselves with such carnal matters" (47). The marriages celebrated by the priestless Old Believers were "a devilish dream and a magic matter, not a sacrament and not purification, but defilement of

46 Ibid., pp.146-149. For the belief that marriages increase the power of Antichrist, see also Uchenie sekty feodosseevoy in Kel'siev, Sbornik, vol.4., p.227.

47 Ibid., pp.153,156.

oneself and others". What was worse, those Old Believers who argued in favour of marriage had taken away from men the fear of God; "God saves man in many ways, especially by fear, but you take away fear from man ... with your actions hardened in pride you have weakened the whole Christian people" (48). Kovylin, evidently, would not have shared Kant's admiration of the enlightenment for having freed man from a state of minority. A strict Theodosian, he was strongly against anybody following his own personal opinion (49). There is a certain logic in Kovylin's argument, though those Old Believers who disagreed with him could take a more cynical view and interpret Kovylin's ideas as a totally immoral justification of hypocrisy and corruption or a de facto toleration of marriage (50). In particular, the prescription to feed babies with cow's milk, because by sucking their sinful mothers' they could become corrupted, was met by

48 Ibid., p.159.

49 See Kniga otecheskoe zaveschanie, chapter 43, f.342.

50 For a Pomoryan comment on Kovylin's views, seen as a *carte blanche* to do whatever sin one is tempted into, as long as one repents of it, see I. Nil'sky, op.cit., pp.211-212. On the other hand, Evfim, the founder of the stranniki, in 1784 condemned the Theodosians for their leniency on marriages. See Uchenie Evfimiya, in Kel'siev, Sbornik 1860, vol.4., p.250. On marriage Kovylin also wrote Voprosy i otvety o vere, chislom 55, in which he railed against theatrical performances, masked balls, Italian opera, powdered wigs and the use of vivisection, which he regarded as obscene and impious, and also reiterated the Theodosian arguments against marriage in the Last Days; his views on the Last Days can be read in Razgovor Il'i Alekseevicha Kovylina s prochimi ob Antikhriste, To the priestly Old Believers, he addressed O polnote svyashchenstva, voprosy tri. According to Bykovsky, (Preobrazhenskii prihod, p.19) Kovylin's writings were printed in Leipzig in 1846.

other Old Believers with indignant disbelief (51). Kovylin's view on marriage eventually resulted in a break with Fedor Anikin Zenkov, who in 1785 left Preobrazhenskoe to join the Moscow Pomoryans, who at the time accepted marriage (52). Zenkov, who defined Kovylin "indulger in lecherous licence" accused him of creating corruption among his workers, whom he made cohabitate in barracks without letting them marry (53). Kovylin had defended his practice with the example of those virgins of Apostolic times who observed chastity while living with men, but Zenkov objected:

"But do consider, Il'ya, with an healthy mind: those holy virgins preserved their chastity of their own free choice in order to please God, and even when living in the world, were not employed in the production of barges and fabrics. Besides there still was a priesthood, and it was possible to marry in full observance of the church ritual; those virgins did not want to marry as a result of their virtuous decision. But nowadays those young women engaged in crafts [devitsy remeslennye] do not live in accordance with their own wish to preserve virginity; they are constrained by their fathers and mothers who refuse to bless their unions. Nowadays virgins indulge in lustful licence [svoboda bludnaya] with your approval, however they must preserve the appearance of virginity; and all this is done complying with the orders of your spiritual fathers who judge of their own opinion [svoerazsudnye]. But I find it very innacurate to compare those artisan virgins of yours with those of antiquity, for there is a distance between them like the one between Heaven and earth".

Cohabitation of men and women could but lead to sin:

"It is easier to see often the devil, rather than a good-looking woman; in fact human nature is corrupted and easily turned to evil; for this reason great adulteries will occur. For if one puts fire in one's depths, will his clothes not burn? And if one walks on burning coal, will he not burn his feet? Put a candle close to hay and tell me how you can prevent it from

51 See e.g., the satirical poem of Andreyan Sergeev Ozersky, in Nadezhdin, K.F., 'Spory bezpōpovtsev', pp.260-264.

52 See K. Nadezhdin, 'Spory...', p.239.

53 Ibid., p245. On the workers employed by Theodosian entrepreneurs, see Ryndzyunsky, 'Staroobryadcheskaya organizatsiya', p. 205 passim.

catching fire? How can it be that you let men and women live in the same place, and write to us that this is done beyond any sin and disgrace? Marvels happen to you, Il'ya. Dry hay does not burn, you walk on burning coal and your feet do not even get scorched" (54).

Against such arguments, the Theodosians retorted that even the holy Fathers of the Church lived with women servants attending to their needs (55).

Kovylin's opponents gave a rather sinister sounding summing up of his thought. The foremost demand appears to be formal respect for the law. There were certain rules which had to be accepted by everyone who wanted to be a member of the community and to which at least lipservice had to be paid. What mattered was orthodoxy, but it was understood that among the Orthodox there could be sinners as well as virtuous men; the repenting sinners could be forgiven and achieve salvation together with those who had not sinned. Heresy, on the contrary, could not be forgiven, and would lead to perdition. Respect for an unquestioned orthodoxy was the bond uniting the members of the community, and authority rested on the capacity of the individual to obey the rules accepted by all. In the words of a present day Pomoryan Old Believer in answer to the inquiry of a Soviet researcher: "We live as our fathers and forefather taught us to. As it was with our old ancestors, so it is with us. We keep to our fathers' benediction: what they gave us, we keep, more we do not know" (56). The highest spiritual and moral authority

54 Quoted in Nil'sky, op.cit., pp.236-237.

55 See, e.g., in Kniga otecheskoe zaveshchanie, chapter 36, ll. 289-292.

56 Quoted in S.E.Nikitina, 'Ustnaya traditsiya...'

rested in the hands of those who were most accomplished in the ascetic pursuit of Christian virtue. On account of their integrity they were in a position to fulfill the function of spiritual fathers towards the other members of the community.

In order better to explain how this worked in practice, it will be useful for the time being to abandon the chronological order of exposition followed until now, and resort instead to the "regressive method" propounded by Marc Bloch: to try and read history backwards making use of materials collected in later times in order to understand earlier ones (57). Luckily the Old Believers present a living tradition and are a living source; in recent years there have been numerous expeditions into their communities that have resulted in the collection of abundant materials. Beliefs and habits have been studied in their applications in everyday life, thus allowing the historian to understand how and what to read beyond the sets of accepted rules (58). Novozheny and advocates of marriage could be found among both Theodosians and Pomoryans and all other branches of the priestless Old Believers, as marriage was in principle forbidden to all of them. For this reason, the study of either Theodosians or Pomoryans can be useful for the description of both. The Pomoryans of the Perm' region, in particular of the territory known as Verkhokam'e, are suitable as they have been the object of study and observation both in the nineteenth and in the twentieth centuries. The Archimandrite of the

57 On the regressive method and its application in various areas of history, see P. Burke, Popular culture, p.81-84.

58 See Introduction.

Theological Seminary of Kamenets-Podol'sk Pallady studied the Old Believers of the surrounding areas, and came to some interesting conclusions regarding their use of the sacraments, in particular of baptism. The Soviet researcher I.V. Pozdeeva directed, starting from 1966, numerous "archaeographical expeditions" in the same area, and her observations are a useful supplement of Pallady's, as well as surprising us with the realization of the extent to which the traditions of the Old Believers are still a social reality in areas far from the centres of contemporary life (59). Pallady noticed that the priestless Old Believers believed that the only effective means of purification from sin was baptism. For this reason they preferred to baptize young people only when they were in danger of death, because baptism was such a crucial and serious undertaking, that it was feared young people would not be able to benefit from it and abstain from sins which would have wasted its saving effect. A baptized Christian would be given another name, the so-called angel'skoe imya, or "angelic name", different from the one he had "in the world"; he would abstain from mundane concerns and devote the rest of his life to religious pursuits. Indeed, properly speaking, only a baptized Pomoryan was deemed a Christian. A non-baptized one was considered a miryanin, a layman still devoted to worldly concerns, - and marriage could be allowed only to laymen and women [miryane] who had not yet taken upon themselves the obligations of the Christians. Thus, unless in

59 Pallady, Obozrenie Permskogo raskola, St.Petersburg 1863; I.V.Pozdeeva, 'Vereshchaginskoe territorial'noe knizhnoe sobranie...', 1982.

case of extreme need and urgency, baptism would not usually be administered before the thirtieth year of age, and the later the better, because old people found it easier to renounce the world and live in piety beyond its temptations. Of course, it was contemplated that men could sin even after baptism. For sins committed after the baptismal purification, other means of purifying the soul were prayers, prostrations, vigils, fasting, almsgiving, repentance and confession (60). Many Theodosians who wished their children to be allowed to common prayers after marriage, had them baptized after marriage, so that they could be accepted as starozheny (61). Pozdeeva's remarks are crucial to an understanding of the relationship between the sobor and the mir. The councils of the Pomoryans called themselves sobory; the sobory shaped the social and religious life of the community. Only Christians, i.e., baptized Pomoryans were members of the sobor. They had the obligation to observe the whole prescriptive system of rules, and they had to abandon the world, so that they could perform liturgical functions in the community. They had to incarnate, as it were, the preNikonian past, kept it alive as the Vestals kept burning the flame of the temple. The members of the sobor, in

60 Pallady, op.cit., pp.120-121. For a baptism in the Old faith on the point of death see, e.g., ODDS, vol.20 (1740), St. Petersburg, 1908, N.552, 27 November 1740, pp.539-540. On the angel'skoe imya see, e.g., N.Vishnyakov, Svedeniya o kupecheskom rode Vishnyakovykh, p.28.

61 A.K.Borozdin, Ocherki, p.21.

their turn, were ruled by the fathers confessors; in the community they had a very important function to fulfill, namely, to administer penance and absolve from sin the members of the sobor; the members of the mir, as we have seen, were not baptized and penance was therefore not administered to them, as their first big purification would have been baptism itself. The salvation of the community seems therefore to have been organized in the following fashion: the fathers confessors ruled over the sobor, and the members of the sobor in their turn organized the liturgical life of the lay community under their authority. The sobor, besides, enjoyed collective control and usage of the books, the knowledge of which lay at the foundation of their authority (62). If this was the "horizontal" system of authority, "vertically" there was a complementary organization which revolved round the life cycle of the individual. Pozdeeva points out that it is very rare for a man to be a member of the sobor for the whole course of his life: such a state would have put many too heavy demands on him. As a rule, men would be members of the sobor (sobornye or priobshchennye), for about ten years before their marriage, and after the interruption of their marriage relationship (63). Pozdeeva's observations differ from Pallady's in that among the Old Believers studied by her baptism seems to be administered to future members of the sobor, with the understanding that in case of marriage they will have to relinquish for the whole period of their married life their

62 Pozdeeva, op.cit., pp.42-44.

63 Ibid., p.42.

position in the sobor. As B.A.Uspensky has pointed out, there was a special verb to describe this transition from the early state of belonging to the sobor to participation in the life of the world: mirshchit'sya which also meant to entertain communication and contacts with Nikonians (64). Mirshchit'sya meant to enter the sinful, worldly phase of life. S.E.Nikitina, a participant of Pozdeeva's archeographical expeditions, rightly points out that the permission to lead one's life in the mir as a possible stage in life was a necessary compromise for the priestless Old Believers who refused marriage bezpopovtsy -bezbrachniki. Marriage was not the only sinful occupation allowed in that phase of life: the miryane, or "laymen", were the only ones who could tell folk tales and stories about the manifestations of the Evil Spirit (nechistaya sila); they could wear contemporary clothes, make use of new inventions and be treated indulgently when transgressing prohibitions such as not to drink coffee or tea. The very fact that marriage was not regulated by the sobor and was a purely worldly thing made it possible to make use of pagan rituals of marriage (65). The division between mir and sobor was very keenly felt. Uspensky has observed that this dualism was felt also in the pronunciation of the language: the members of the sobor made use of an ancient liturgical pronunciation, while the mir used the ordinary spoken language (zhivaya rech'): in

64 See B.A.Uspensky, Knizhnoe proiznoshenie v Rossii, p.673.

65 Nikitina (op.cit., pp. 99-109) points out that the transition from the status of miryanin to the status of sobornyi entailed a brusque change of artistic repertoire.

this situation of near diglossia, the differences of pronunciation acquired a semantic character (66). All things considered, it is not surprising that nowadays the miryane are becoming ever more hesitant to enter the sobor, and tend to put this off until a very advanced age. It is only for the sobornye that the condition of celibacy (bezbrachie) is obligatory. Sobornye who in spite of the prohibition did marry, would be subjected to excommunication (otluchenie) from the sobor. In actual practice, this entailed loss of authority inside the community, and a return to the mir (67). What is most striking in this system, is that the life of the miryane remains nearly unregulated, they find themselves in a situation in which it is understood that they are not obliged to follow all the rules of their society and their transgression are tolerated as unavoidable compromises with the demands of this world. It is as if the miryane lived without any internalized repression. For the life of the layman there were no fixed rules. It is in this context that one can understand the criticism of those Old Believers who were in favour of a regulation of marriage and deplored the state of disorder which was an inevitable consequence of its absence. For instance, P.O.Lyubopytny, as will be seen in the next chapter, firmly believed that this area of life ought to be regulated; it was not just a matter of

66 See B.A. Uspensky, (op.cit., pp.7, 426-433, 840) shows that this keen attention to language derives from the penetration of Hesychasm in Russia.

67 S.E. Nikitina, op.cit., pp. 97-98, 114.

obligatory chastity, but of creating an Old Believer church which would be able to cater for all the needs of its members, not just for the members of the sobor. Besides, a church unable to meet the demand for marriage could be deserted by some of its members (68). Of course, it can be surmised that custom intervened where regulations were silent. As we shall see from some examples now, priestless Old Believers, in disregard of all prohibitions, could lead quite a normal family life, marry, have children and let them inherit their property.

(The Moscow Old Believer merchants)

One more digression is now necessary in order to have at least a glimpse of the social background of the Old Believers and of the debate on the question of marriage. The reign of Catherine II saw two significant changes in the condition of the Old Believers: religious tolerance; and urbanization connected to developments in commercial and industrial activities (69). Much

68 See, e.g., F.P.Kozmin 'Moya zhizn' v raskole i obrashchenie v pravoslavie', p.300, and, for a 1793 fictional portrayal of a young girl who abandons the home of her parents, because they are priestless Old Believers who do not allow her to marry, see V.P. Stepanov, 'K agiografii Chupyatova', pp.136, 149 and passim. For a case of desertion of the Old Faith for the sake of marriage, see ODDS, vol.5, St.Petersburg, 1897, appendix to n.251,1725, coll. DXXVIII-DXXXII.

69 On the policy of tolerance in the reign of Catherine II see P.Pera, "Dispotismo illuminato e dissenso religioso". On commerce and industry, see I.de Madariaga, Russia in the age of Catherine the Great, pp. 455-487. See also D. Wallace, 'Grigorii Teplov and the conception of order'; and Uchrezhdeniya Kupecheskogo Samoupravleniya, vol. 5 in V.N. Storozhev ed., Istoriya Moskvy i Kupecheskogo Obshchestva, which is of interest because Moscow was the city with the highest Old Believer population. It reaches until 1805, the year in which the guild was abolished and substituted by the 'kupecheskoe otделение Doma Moskovskogo Obshchestva Gradskago'. For a very impressionistic view of Catherinian Russia see E.P. Karnovich, Zamechatel'niya Bogatstva chastnykh lits v Rossii. See also I.M. Kulisher, Ocherk

has been written about the remarkable spirit of economic initiative of the Old Believers and their contribution to the development of the Russian economy. Indeed, if the Old Believers are known at all to historians at large, that is because in a famous essay A.Gerschenkron chose the example of the Old Believers to discuss Weber's hypothesis on the origins of capitalism (70). Their economic initiative has been observed by many historians of the Russian economy (71). The most recent studies of the Russian merchantry have not failed to acknowledge their importance in the development of the Russian economy (72). Yet the view that the Old Believers occupied any special place in the Russian economy requires qualification; it has been shown that although their role and contribution were of

istorii russkoy trgovli; N.N.Firsov, Pravitel'stvo i obshchestvo; G.L.Vartanov, Kupechestvo. A. Rieber in Merchants and Entrepreneurs in Imperial Russia, p. 70, sees a connection between the policy of religious toleration and the improvements in trade, while Beliajeff ('The Economic Power of the Old Believers in Mid-Nineteenth Century Moscow', p. 42 n.4) disagrees. 70 See chapters 1 and 2 in A. Gerschenkron Europe in the Russian Mirror; H. Beyer, 'Marx, Weber und die russischen Altgläubigen'. On the role of the Old Believers in industry and trade see also V.G. Kartsov, 'Sotsial'ny osnovy...'. 71 Among the many, see the works quoted by A. Gerschenkron, op.cit.; see also V.G.Druzhinin, "Znachenie truda", pp. 24-26: Druzhinin repeats common knowledge, and advocates more research on the subject; V.N.Yakovtsetsky, Kupecheskiy Kapital; P.A. Buryshkin, Moskva Kupecheskaya; P. Kovalevsky, 'Le "raskol" et son role'; R.Portal, 'Aux origines'; W.Blackwell, 'The Old Believers'; K.S.Kuybyshev, Krupnaya moskovskaya burzhuaziya; and A.S. Zenkovsky, 'Staroobryadtsy tekhnokraty'.

72 See e.g., Owen, Capitalism and politics in Russia A Social history of the Moscow Merchants; A.Rieber, Merchants and Entrepreneurs in Imperial Russia; J. Ruckmann, The Moscow Business elite: a social and cultural portrait of two generations, 1840-1905.

importance, nevertheless the percentage of merchants among the Old Believers was not higher than their percentage among the rest of the population (73). On the other hand, the initiative of the Old Believers may seem more striking for two reasons: because Moscow was the most important Old Believer centre, a place therefore where the Old Believer merchants could seem a majority; and because many Old Believer entrepreneurs were serfs who by their intelligence and initiative managed to create a prosperous business and a merchant dynasty; no Old Believer merchant came from the old established merchant families (74).

The registered members of the trading quarter (posad) in the towns always defended their privileges against newcomers, and the merchants resented the trade of the peasants. In

73 See A.S.Beliajeff. op.cit., and by the same author "The rise of the Old Orthodox Merchants of Moscow." However, according to A.Rieber (op.cit., p.81), the Old Believers were among the most innovative entrepreneurs and participated actively in local politics.

74 See A.S.Beliajeff, "The rise of the Old Orthodox Merchants," p.2. On the serfs-entrepreneurs, see V.N.Kashin, Materialy po istorii krest'yanskoy promyshlennosti, Kashin is very critical of Tugan-Baranovsky for failing to take into account the role played by the peasantry in the development of the Russian economy; by the same author see also 'Ekonomicheskii byt i sotsial'noe rassloenie krepostnoy derevni v XIX v.'; N.I. Pavlenko, 'O nekotorykh storonakh pervonachal'nogo nakopleniya v Rossii'; G.L.Vartanov, 'Kupechestvo i torguyuushchce krest'yanstvo tsentral'noy chasti evropeyskoy Rossii' and by the same author 'Moskovskoe i inogorodnoe kupechestvo vo vtoroy polovine XVIII v.'; J.Kulisher, 'Die kapitalistischen Unternehmer in Russland'; H.Rozovskyi, 'The serf entrepreneur in Russia'. N.M. Chukmaldin, Zapiski o moyey zhizni are the memoirs of a peasant of Tyumen' who became a merchant and a millionaire, his recollections about the Theodosians and Filipponians make good reading; a curiosity can be T.G. Snytko, Vesti o Rossii, Povest' v stikakh krepostnogo krest'yanina 1830-1840gg.

question whether or not to abolish these privileges was much discussed, and in the end the view prevailed that access to the merchant estate should be a matter of money alone, thus opening up opportunities for the trading peasants (75). It can be surmised that among the peasants who succeeded in profiting from this new legislation there must have been many Old Believer entrepreneurs; and there is evidence that commercial contacts with Old Believers could result in conversions to the Old Faith (76). In Catherine's time the Old Believers began to move into the towns. The setting up of the Preobrazhenskoe and Rogozhskoe communities were turning points. By the middle of the nineteenth century they constituted one-sixth of the Moscow merchant population. The majority of the Moscow Old Believer merchants were priestly Old Believers (77).

All the Old Believer merchant dynasties had been founded by peasants (78). The most prominent and long-lasting were those of

75 See A.A.Kizewetter, Posadskaya obshchina v Rossii XVIII st., Moscow, 1903. The peasants were given official permission to engage in trade in 1799. Peasant initiative had been increasing in the second half of the eighteenth century: see V.N. Yakovtsevsky, Kupecheskiy kapital, pp.143-145.

76 See e.g., ODDS, vol. 19, St. Petersburg, 1917, n.431, 12 September 1739, p.543; vol.20, St. Petersburg, 1908, n.483, 21 October 1740, p.496; vol.26, St. Petersburg, 1907, n.287, 10 October 1746, p.449.

77 See A.S.Beliageff, 'The Economic Power of the Old Believers...', pp.37-38.

78 Beliajeff ('The rise of the Old Orthodox merchants..' pp.111-113) observes that in spite of the change in government policy, unfavourable to the Old Believers, all the major dynasties consolidated themselves during the reign of Nicholas I.

the Ryabushinskys, the Morozovs, the Soldatenkovs, the Konovalovs, and the Guchkovs. The first three had been founded by priestly Old Believers, the last two by priestless Old Believers (79). Only the Guchkovs were Theodosian. Other Theodosians who enjoyed remarkable industrial success without succeeding in establishing a long-lasting merchant dynasty were the Grachevs. On the whole however most of the priestless Old Believers merchants belonged to the second guild (80). A few words on both the Guchkovs and the Grachevs will help to outline the physionomy of the Theodosian merchant (81). Ivan Ivanovich Grachev (1706-1761), a serf of P.B.Sheremet'yev's in the industrial village of Ivanovo, succeeded in acquiring extended properties there in the name of his master and in creating a textile manufacture of considerable importance (82).

79 On the Ryabushinskys, see note 94 of the present chapter; on the Konovalovs, see Torgovo-promyshlennaya deyatel'nost' firmy Ivana Aleksandrovicha Konovalova 1812-1896, Moscow 1896, on the merchants and the factories see the beautifully illustrated Ch.M. Yaksimovich, Manufakturnaya promyshlennost' v proshlom i nastoyashchem Moscow 1915. In A.S. Beliajeff (op.cit., p.146), see table on Old Believers merchant dynasties.

80 Beliajeff, 'The economic power...', p.38.

81 Other less prominent Theodosian merchants were Lyubushkin, Fedorov, Nikiforov, Pamfilov, Gusarev, as well as two women-merchants: Zhdanova, who was engaged in the production of carriages, and Dvoryanshikova, who was engaged in the production of beer and mead. See Beliajeff, op.cit., p.39.

82 Grachev was a serf of A.M.Cherkassky and then of P.B. Sheremet'ev. He bought his labour force in the name of Sheremet'ev. See A.A. Stepanov, 'Krest'yane-fabrikanty Grachevy'; and B.B.Kafengauz, Ocherki vnutrennego rynka, pp.52-53. On Ivanovo see also N. Polushin, 'Ocherk nachala i razvitiia sitsevoy promyshlennosti v sele Ivanove i posade Voznesenskom', and 'Ocherk XXV-letnogo razvitiia manufakturnoy promyshlennosti vladimirskoy gubernii'; A.M. Razdan ('Promyshlennye i torgovye slobody i sela Vladimirskoy gubernii', pp.137-159), discusses the role of Grachev, his election as head of the local mir and his role of leadership among the Old Believer merchants.

He had three children; the younger of these, Efim Ivanovich (1743-1819), inherited and continued his father's business, and competed successfully with the other prominent textile manufacturer of Ivanovo, Garelin; in 1781 Efim had 312 cotton mills, while Garelin had only 200. At the same time Efim Grachev was busy introducing innovatory techniques in cotton-printing (83). Efim also enlarged the landed property inherited from his father, making all purchases in the name of Petr Borisovich Sheremet'ev. In July 1795 Efim succeeded in buying his freedom and became a merchant of the first guild; he was the richest man in Ivanovo. But he had to pay a high price for his freedom: 135,000 rubles. Moreover, Sheremet'ev did not allow him to acquire property rights on his land and manufactures, of which he became the simple lessee; all attempts to buy from Sheremet'ev what had been the fruit of his entrepreneurship failed (84). In spite of these difficulties, his affairs prospered and his workers were among the best paid in Ivanovo (85).

Efim was one of the main benefactors of the Preobrazhenskoe community. In 1805 it was he who provided the means for the construction of a chapel for women, which was called after him.

83 See A.A.Stepanov, op.cit., p.228-229 and 'Koleristy i naboyschiki Vladimirskoy gubernii', pp.37-45.

84 A.A. Stepanov, op.cit., pp.230-232. Sheremet'ev was a particularly difficult master for rich serfs who wanted to buy their freedom: see Tourgueneff, La Russie et les russes, vol.II, Paris 1847, pp.127-128. See also K.N. Shchepetov, Krepostnoe pravo v votchinakh Sheremet'eva, and, for an analogous situation, N. Shipov, Istoriya moey zhizni, p.15.

85 See M.Tugan-Baranovsky, Russkaya fabrika v proshlom i nastoyashchem, pp.97-98 and 182.

On this occasion, an homily was composed to honour him and his daughter Varvara (86). His influence on Preobrazhenskoe increased after he won an administrative conflict which took place there in 1816 (87). Unfortunately his heirs were not equally inclined to business. Under the administration of his daughter Varvara his textile manufactories began to decline until in 1834 they were taken over by others. Varvara Efimovna nevertheless remained the most important and respected benefactress of Preobrazhenskoe (88). Thus in spite of a brilliant beginning, the Grachevs did not succeed in creating a lasting merchant dynasty. Here it must be stressed that Grachev's committed attachment to Preobrazhenskoe did not in any way prevent him from having a public family life, a wife and children. His daughter Varvara was honoured at Preobrazhenskoe, his son Dimitry (1766-1803) married in turn into another merchant family, the Sheval'dishev (89). Unfortunately, in the absence of more data, how the Grachevs succeeded in reconciling their family life and their Theodosian faith remains a matter of speculation. On the basis of what has been written before, it can be surmised

86 A.Stepanov, op.cit., p.243. Grachev also helped the University of Moscow: see S.P.Shevyrev, Istoriya Imperatorskogo Moskovskogo Universiteta, p.441.

87 See chapter 7.

88 A.A. Stepanov, op.cit., p.245

89 See A.I.Aksenov, "Moskovskoe kupechestvo v XVIII v.", p.96,110,141, and table 8 showing the family connections of the Grachevs. Aksenov (pp.122-133) stresses the importance of marriage ties in the process of inurbation of peasant entrepreneurs.

that by some acrobatics in the timing of their baptism in the Theodosian faith and their membership of the sobor, they somehow managed to escape criticism.

The Guchkovs present a similar picture. The founder of the dynasty, Fedor Alekseevich Guchkov (1778-1856), was a house serf from Kaluga who, born in the dominant faith, later became a Theodosian (90). In the 1790s Guchkov's landlady, Belavina, gave him permission to work in Moscow, where he eventually succeeded in establishing his own weaving workshop, which by the 1840's had developed into one of the largest spinning-weaving factories in Moscow. Guchkov eventually bought his freedom from Belavina and became one of the leading members of the Preobrazhenskoe community. In 1835, he became an hereditary distinguished citizen and a merchant of the second guild; by then he had a factory which accounted for one-quarter of the Old Believer production of wool and cotton goods (91). Fedor Alekseevich Guchkov's aspirations, after his business success, turned to religion, and as soon as he could, he put the whole business in the hands of his son Efim (1805-1859) and dedicated himself to the reading of religious and gardening books (92). Efim gave a great impulse to the business; on his own he learnt foreign languages and in 1842 went abroad in order to study

90 A.S. Beliajeff, "The rise of the Old Orthodox Merchants," pp.125-130; and N.Ch. 'Moskovskoe kupechestvo XVIII i XIX vekov.', p.495.

On a prominent member of the Guchkov family in later times, see L.Menashe, "Alexander Guchkov and the origins of the Octobrist party." For facts on the Guchkovy, see also I.M. Snegirev, Dnevnik.

91 A.S.Beliajeff, op.cit., pp.125-129. Guchkov's factory produced goods for an annual volume of 516,000 rubles, had 964 workers, 350 looms and 200 jacquards.

92 See Ocherk trgovoy i obshchestvennosti deyatel'nosti Guchkova, p.6.

foreign systems of production. In 1857 he was chosen town chief (gorodskoy golova) of the Moscow city society, and in the course of his career he received fourteen decorations for his economic activities, among them a medal and a diploma signed by Prince Albert, for his participation in the London Royal Commission for the preparations of the Universal Exhibition in 1851. Efim conducted his family affairs publicly: in 1830 he married Aleksandra Egorovna Malysheva, the daughter of an important corn dealer, and after an exemplary family life which earned him praise as an excellent paterfamilias, he became a widower at the early age of thirty three in 1838 and remained unmarried (93). Efim with his combination of business entrepreneurship and religious and spiritual interests answers very well to V. Ryabushinsky's characterization of the Old Believer merchant as being "well-read, rich ... with a beard, in the Russian floor-length clothing, a talented manufacturer, a master for hundreds, sometimes a thousand working people, and at the same time an expert on Old Russian art, an archeologist, a collector of icons, books, manuscripts, understanding historical and economic questions, loving his business, but also full of spiritual inquiries ..." (94).

The case of the Grachevs and the Guchkovs show that priestless Old Believers could develop and prosper without being significantly inhibited by the prohibition of

93 Ibid., pp.8-15.

94 See V.P.Ryabushinsky, Staroobryadchestvo i russkoe religioznoe chuvstvo, p.38. The Ryabushinskys were themselves prominent Old Believer entrepreneurs of the priestly branch. See also Torgovoe i promyshlennoe delo Ryabushinskikh; B. Marchadier 'Sur le livre de Vladimir Rjabusinskij'; and V.P.Ryabushinsky, 'Kupechestvo moskovskoe'.

marriage. Besides, priestless Old Believers were not restricted by their religion in the contacts with followers of other faiths. With them, they could have not only commercial and financial transactions, but also discussions on matters of faith and custom. The memoirs of Russian merchants offer frequent recollection of debates and discussions of religious issues, a popular subject among the merchants (95).

(The Moscow Pomoryans)

All these merchants just considered were Theodosians. They could reconcile their family life with their faith thanks to a clever timing of their baptism and membership of the sobor, and by having recourse to confession and penance. This was the system in use at Preobrazhenskoe, which other priestless Old Believers did not find acceptable. In Moscow there were Pomoryans like Vasily Emel'yanov who were trying to regulate the relationship

95 See e.g., V. Borisov, Moi vospominaniya (iz zhizni v raskole), p.8; it is worth keeping in mind that the Orthodox merchants were also deeply religious and interested in religious questions: see e.g., N.Krestovnikov, Semeynaya khronika Krestovnikovykh; A. Sokolov, 'Zhizn' kuptsa Berezhina'; G. Emel'yanov, 'Ivan Ivanovich Borisov'; Vospominaniya o Vasilii Feduloviche Gromove; P. Polidorov, 'Ivan Mikhailovich Nemytov'; I.F.Gorbunov, Otryvki iz vospominaniya; N.Vishnyakov, Svedeniya o kupecheskom rode Vishnyakovykh; G.T. Polilova-Severtseva, Nashi dedu kuptsy; N.Shipov, Istoriya moy zhizni. It was so unusual for a Russian merchant not to read religious literature, that one who did not do so was for that reason considered a Freemason: see Kaluzhanin, 'Vospominaniya o M.A. Makarove'. On the Russian merchants see also two Soviet studies: A.P.Botkina, Pavel Mikhailovich Tret'yakov; and M. Kopshister, Savva Mamontov. For a visual idea of the Russian merchants, see M.Priselkov, Kupecheskiy bytovoy portret XVIII-XX vv. and illustrations 12-13 here, which are eloquent example of the change from one generation of merchants to the next.

between man and woman, also in order to avoid undesirable confusions in the degrees of kinship. According to Emel'yanov, anyone who was not able to lead a chaste life should take an oath of eternal and indissoluble cohabitation with a woman of his choice, and fulfill the ensuing obligations in front of society and the family (96). Already before the foundation of the Preobrazhenskoe cemetery in 1771 there were in Moscow a few families of Pomoryans, i.e., of priestless Old Believers who were under the moral authority and guidance of the Vyg fathers. They, consequently, accepted prayers for the Imperial family and had a doctrine of marriage which was different from that of the Theodosians, though not necessarily in line with Vyg's preaching on the subject. These Pomoryans followed neither Ivan Alekseev's doctrine which allowed for marriages to be celebrated in Nikonian churches, nor the Theodosian absolute prohibition of any form of sanction to relationships between men and women.

In a way, they had assimilated Ivan Alekseev's doctrines as to what constitutes the substance of marriage, without accepting his views on the opportunity to having it registered by a Nikonian priest. The marriages of the Pomoryans remained therefore purely

96 I. Nil'sky, op.cit., pp.227-228.

a family matter, and remained open to the Theodosians' disparaging accusations that they, like cattle, had their unions sanctioned in stables. Partly to counter this demeaning suggestion, and partly to resist the influence and prestige of the Theodosians which had been increasing since 1771, the Pomoryans decided to institute their own independent place of worship in Moscow. The initiative has been credited to Vasily Emel'yanov (1729-1797), a collector of ancient liturgical books, holy objects, manuscripts and history books, well known among Old Believers for his erudition, whose social status was apparently that of a state peasant. He had taken part at the 1765 Moscow Council between the priestly and priestless Old Believers the aim of which had been to find a bishop acceptable to both of them in order to eliminate all points of dissension. The council had failed to achieve its aim, but Emel'yanov continued to meditate on the question, connected to the need for a bishop, of Old Believer marriage (97). He did not agree with Alekseev's solution of allowing Old Believers to be married by Nikonian priests; to avoid such an undesirable contamination with the Church of Antichrist he became, in Lyubopytny's words, "the first pastor who liberated married Christians from the clear abyss of Nikonianism", in other words he solved the problem of

97 Vasilevsky, 'Istoriya pokrovskoy molel'nii v Moskve', p.137.

marriage by organising a chapel where marriages would be celebrated not by a priest, which the Old Believers could not have, but by a pastyr', a lay pastor chosen by his flock (98). In 1774 Emel'yanov founded such a chapel on his own initiative, where he celebrated marriages and all other religious rituals. Emel'yanov enjoyed the active support of at least fifty Old Believers among whom there were some merchants of respectable means. One of them, Vasily Feodorov Monin, provided the land for the construction of the chapel, which was built with collective funds in the Lefortovo quarter of Moscow. Being situated in the Pokrovskaya chast', it was called the Pokrovskaya as well as the Moninskaya chapel (99). Among the founders of the chapel there were also some who had defected from the Preobrazhenskoe cemetery, for instance Pimen Alekseev, nicknamed "karetnik" after his *trade* in carriages, who before joining the Pomoryans was one of the most prominent Theodosians. His change of mind may have been due to an unwillingness to submit control of his finances to Kovylin, as well as to a reluctance to give up his family ties (100).

98 Lyubopytny, op.cit., pp.78-79. On the Pomoryan pastors, see N.I.Kostomarov, Istoriya raskola u raskol'nikov, pp.254-255. Incidentally, it was a standard accusation from the popovtsy to the bezpopovtsy that they were like the Lutherans in having simple peasants who acted as pastors instead of properly ordained priests. See, e.g., O polnote svyashchenstva otvety tri, f.120: "vashi bolshaki prostyga...muzhiki, po podob'yu lyutorskikh pastyrov", where the bezpopovtsy are accused of being even worse than the Lutherans, for living "samochinno" (f.120v).

99 Vasilevsky, op.cit., p.137. Other merchants attached to the chapel were Ivan Filippov (1725-1798), Andreyan Sergeev Ozersky (1766-after 1828) and Aleksey Yakovlevich Zaytsevsky (1759-1803) who wrote to Metropolitan of Moscow Platon to defend the legitimacy of the marriage of the Moscow merchant Vasily Feodorov Monin. See Lyubopytny, op.cit., p.72.

100 The signature of Pimen Alekseev Karetnik figures among those appended to the 1771 petition to Eropkin for the foundation of the Preobrazhenskoe cemetery - see N.Popov, Sbornik 1864,

Feodor Anikin Zenkov, who had been converted to the old faith together with Kovylin, was another who deserted the Preobrazhenskoe community and became a patron of the Pokrovskaya. Lyubopytny writes of him that "more than once he healed Theodosians from their hardened errors, more than once he triumphed and defeated them publicly" (101). Another founding member of the Moninskaya chapel was Nikifor Petrov (?-1843) a ribbon maker who eventually became known as "the fashionable Old Believer" (modnyi staroobryadets), from the title of a satirical poem composed against him by the Pomoryans Gavriil Larionovich Skachkov and Andreyan Sergeev. Nikifor Petrov earned this nickname because he and the circle around him became extremely open to "vneshnie", i.e., to non-Old Believers, they thought that all were equal, that foreign dress and fashions could be accepted, that there should be no hostility towards followers of other faiths, and that relations of any kind could be entertained with them (102). The Pokrovskaya chapel was in

p.77. He is mentioned by the Old Believer Fedor Anikin Zenkov as one of the most prominent Theodosians (Druzhinin, p.53), while Vasilevsky (op.cit., p.137) mentions him as one of the founding members of the Moninskaya chapel.

101 Nil'sky, op.cit., p.216; Lyubopytny, op.cit., pp.78-79.

102 Vasilevsky, op.cit., pp.137,155; N.I.Kostomarov, Istoriya raskola u raskol'nikov, pp.256-7. According to Kostomarov, Nikifor Petrov's doctrines are but the consequence and the logical conclusion of ideas such as those preached by Lyubopytny (see next chapter), and that therefore Lyubopytny's disapproval of them is shortsighted. In 1836 Nikifor Petrov succeeded Antip Andreev as nastoyatel' of the chapel, but he was apparently too weak and unable to keep discipline. In 1807 he had tried a pacification with Preobrazhenskoe. His name and the name of his wife figure in the list of the Moninskaya chapel for the 1830s. See N.I.Popov, Materialy..., p.93.

some ways a replica of Preobrazhenskoe: it also had annexed to it a vast building for the assistance of the poor and sick. It adopted the same statute as the one governing Vyg, with modifications and concessions regarding marriage. To regulate the life of the chapel the Pokrovtsy also drafted, some time between 1774 and 1782, the Hundred Articles (103), in which they rejected Theodosian doctrines on the inscription on the cross and on prayers for the Imperial family; on account of these differences there existed between Pomoryans and Theodosians a condition of mutual excommunication (Art. 2-4 and 52 in particular). As for marriage, the only form accepted by Pomoryans was the one sanctioned by a religious ceremony performed inside the Pomoryan church. Thus, article 6 stated that

"Pagan and heretical marriages must not be accepted after baptism, and must not be confirmed by the church: for by means of such a marriage the mind and conscience are made impure. Nowhere can this sacrament be performed except in the Holy Church of God, which is not to be found among the heretics. For all which is done by them is displeasing and unacceptable to God. Even if these unreasonable and ununderstanding and unconfirmed and false Christians try to claim that their actions are true and pleasing to God; however the sacraments of Christ cannot be accomplished by the Devil, and from dung no fragrance can emanate, neither from a rotten corpse can one be healed, ... nor with heresy or lack of faith can a liturgical action be accomplished. Community with the heretics is subjected to curse and anathema; from the impious one defilement is derived".

So much for Ivan Alekseev's doctrine that marriage could be

103 Sto statey moskovskikh Pomorskogo soglasiya. The articles presumably date from between 1774, year of foundation of the chapel, and 1782, year of the abolition of the double poll tax which is mentioned in art.50,p.206.

celebrated in Nikonian churches: the hostility towards the Nikonian church was such that a Christian - i.e., a Pomoryan - who happened to be passing by a Nikonian church at the time of the celebration of service was supposed to shut his ears, in order not to hear the Antichristian liturgy, and run away (Art 30). "If one is not able to lead a virginal way of life - continued article 6 - one must marry in virtue and chastity, in the Church, in front of a pastor, in front of the Queen of Heaven". "Marriages concluded by kidnapping of the spouse, or concluded in secrecy without the blessing of the church are not legitimate ... intercourse outside the blessing of the church is nothing but fornication". The Hundred Articles adopted by the Pokrovskaya stated therefore clearly that there was a sacrament of marriage inside the Pomoryan Church, and that there was no justification for sin and extramarital relations. The followers of Ivan Alekseev's doctrine, called "novozheny" by the Pomoryans (while in Theodosian terminology the Pomoryans too are called novozheny, their unions being deemed illegitimate) were excommunicated, and their unions were to be regarded as fornication; they amounted to a negation of the faith, and for this reason novozheny could be reaccepted into the community only after an ecclesiastical penalty and a dissolution of their union (Art. 37). Pomoryans were not to discuss the doctrines of the novozheny, neither were they to mix with people of such ideas (Art. 39). Since there was a sacrament of marriage, there were also rules regulating behaviour connected with childbearing. Houses where a birth had taken place were not to be entered for a period of forty days and transgressors of this rule would be

penalised (Art. 43); but purificatory prayers to be pronounced on women who had given birth were not prescribed (Art. 44). The Pomoryans remained faithful to Andrey Denisov's teaching concerning the starozheny: baptism entailed a complete renovation of Man, and washed away all previous commitments. Therefore, marriages celebrated before conversion were not considered legitimate, and would need to be celebrated again by the church (Art. 7). The community of the Pomoryans was under the authority of a council, or sobor, composed by the nastoyatel' and the nastavniki. They were expected to lead a monastic life (Arts. 10-14) and, naturally were not to have intercourse with women, neither were they supposed to discuss church matters with them (Arts. 81-93). Iconpainters, in conformity with the Orthodox theory of sacred art, were also expected to lead a celibate life of spiritual exertion and to observe chastity (Art. 15). In the Pomoryan chapel Emel'yanov, who was appointed nastoyatel', composed a ritual of marriage in which he enumerated the five conditions necessary for its perfection: the agreement of the bridegroom and bride; the blessing of their parents; the plighting of troth; the presence of witnesses; and the majority of the spouses (104). Gavriil Larionovich Skachkov (1745-1821), Emel'yanov's assistant at the chapel, and after the latter's death in 1797 his successor as nastoyatel' composed a canon for the celebration of marriages. Skachkov was one of the most talented and creative Moscow Pomoryans. His social status was apparently that of meshchanin, but his activity was that of pastor and teacher of his church. Pious and cultivated, he was

104 Nil'sky, op.cit., p.21.

considered an excellent writer in both prose and verse. He made us of his wit as a polemicist and of his gifts as a rhetorician mainly against the Theodosians, denounced the compromise with the Nikonian church called "edinoverie" which he scornfully referred to as a "uniate church". He led a life of severe piety and zeal, and bore with patience and magnanimity, like the "true Christian philosopher" that he was, the poisonous slander and abuse of his enemies. His authority was very great in church councils, where he participated in the quality of presiding member, and where he was active in the drafting of resolutions and rules (105). The canon which he composed for the celebration of the marriages in the chapel was very much admired by Lyubopytny. It does not differ significantly from the traditional rite of the marriage ceremony. As it happens, the traditional ritual of marriage has an abundance of Biblical examples of virtuous and just couples whose marriages were blessed in pre-Christian times, and the only example taken from the New Testament was the marriage at Cana, which was blessed by Jesus's presence and miracle but celebrated according to the Jewish rite. The only new thing which Skachkov had to add in view of the controversy surrounding the subject of marriage was a question to the spouses, asking them if they truly regarded the sacred ceremony in which they were being blessed and united in marriage as the true form of marriage (106).

105 Lyubopytny, op.cit., pp.91-92. On edinoverie, see P. Pera 'Edinoverie...', and by the same author, 'The development of the Policy of Edinoverie ...'.

106 Skachkov, Kanon pevaemyi vo vremya sochetaniya braka ili chin brachnomu molitvosloviyu; compare it with the ordinary ritual of marriage of the Orthodox church in A.Maltsev, Tainstva pravoslavnoy kafolicheskoy vostochnoy tserkvi, vol.5, pp.246-278.

Pavel Onufrevich Lyubopytny, the most active propounder of marriage, also contributed to the celebration of the marriages of the Pokrovskaya chapel. In 1803 he composed an Ustav Brachnyi which presents some interest because it allows one to view the ceremony of marriage in the context of all the preparations and ceremonies inside the family (107). The Ustav is preceded by a preface in which Lyubopytny explained that because of the tyrannical oppression suffered in previous times the Old Believers had not been able to rise to the level of Revelation and Nature in the judgement of the sixth sacrament, in other words believed that the lack of priesthood excluded the possibility of marriage. Besides, continued Lyubopytny, there were "some scholarly people, if indeed one can call them such, who preached about life in a tragic fashion and turned mourning into an idol". In those days ignorance and chaos triumphed, while the few enlightened people who understood marriage in terms of Revelation and Nature "sighed and were amazed at the blindness of their hardened hearts". But even they could not grasp in its entirety the subject of marriage, so that marriages were celebrated in "multifaceted and most stupid inconsistency", and were a cause of "disorder, shame and dishonour" in front of the Nikonians and other Old Believers. Lyubopytny concludes his preface by stating that the Brachnyi Ustav had been composed in order to preserve the church from all "absurdities", to give praise to the Creator and to glorify Him (108). The Ustav

107 P.O. Lyubopytny, Ustav brachnyi pravovernogo staroverstva, in N. Popov, Materialy..., 1870, pp.17-27. The Ustav was still used in this century: see Sbornik o tainstve braka. pp.18-25.

108 Ibid., pp.12-18.

itself was divided into two chapters. The first contained the preliminaries to the celebration of marriage. Since the celebration of marriage in the temple of God is necessary for the union to achieve "stability, solidity and happiness in imitation of the house of Israel", those who wish to marry must give notice to the nastoyatel' a few days before the intended marriage to enable him to examine their degree of spiritual and physical kinship, the age of the spouses, whether either or both of them are not free, in which case it will be necessary to seek their enfranchisement, if either or both are fugitives, that neither of them has ever pronounced vows of chastity, and that the parents or their superior have given their permission, this condition being proportionally less important according to the age of the spouses. If all these conditions are satisfactory, the marriage can be registered. If one or both of the spouses is a Theodosian, Filipponian or such, they must be questioned on their faith to make sure that they genuinely believe the substance of marriage to consist of the consent of the spouses and the intention to enter into an indissoluble union. If a spouse is a Nikonian or a member of the edinoverie church, according to which all rituals are equivalent in conducing to salvation, the nastoyatel' must be extremely careful and agree to the marriage only eight days after the rebaptism of the non-Old Believer spouse (109). In Chapter two Lyubopyt y described the procedure by which the spouses choose each other and eventually become husband and wife, united in the Pomoryan ritual of marriage.

109 Ibid., pp.18-19.

The family played a weighty role, and the whole process was rather elaborate and complex; Lyubopytny identified as many as eighteen steps. In step one the initiative lies with "reasonable parents" who having observed the "nature of their children" notice when the time has come for them to marry and advise them to do so. After which (step two) they call for the matchmaker, who must be of their own faith, and explain to them their requirements. People who have come of age or are "independent" can arrange all this on their own initiative (step three). After which, the dowry is agreed upon (steps five,six) and the bride is examined in her house (step seven). If after the examination of the bride everyone is happy, the day for the engagement (zaruchenie or rukobitie) is chosen (step eight). Lyubopytny describes in elaborate detail the ceremony of engagement (step nine). Two days after the engagement has taken place the bride is to receive presents from the bridegroom at an evening meeting at which also other guests have been invited. After this social event, the bridegroom fixes the day for the marriage (steps ten, eleven, and twelve). On the eve of the marriage, in the evening, the ceremony called devichnik, takes place; the bridegroom visits the future bride and receives the dowry from her (step thirteen). On the day of the wedding itself there are many complex ceremonies (steps fourteen to seventeen), but even then not everything is finished, because two days after the marriage there is still something to be done: the bride has to give presents to her husbands' relations (step eighteen) (110). As we

110 Ibid., pp.20-27.

can see, Lyubopytny intended that none of the pomp and solemnity attached to the ceremony and traditions of marriage should be missed by the Old Believers, whose marriages in his Ustav are of a complexity in no way inferior to that of the marriages of the big Nikonian families (111).

(The Moscow Pomoryans and Vyg)

The celebrations of marriages by the Moscow Pomoryans caused a strain in their relationship with Vyg. Already before the foundation of the chapel, in 1769, two Moscow Pomoryans had been wondering about the legitimacy of certain unions which, before the institution of marriages in the Pokrovskaya chapel, were celebrated in private houses and were blessed at home by Vasily Emel'yanov; they had written to Vyg about their doubts. From Vyg Daniil Matveev (1687-1776) thanked the two Pomoryans for the "epistolary present of the questions" - he was obviously pleased to be consulted about what was to be done in Moscow and deplored it. In Vyg, he explained, the starozheny were "healed" with an ecclesiastical penance of fourteen days, men who had wife and children were not allowed to share food and prayers with the Christians (i.e., with baptized Pomoryans), couples who had been married with the blessing of their parents were allowed to live "as they pleased" but were accepted only after they repented; as for the unions of a certain Semen and a certain Vasily, who had married without accepting that they would suffer discrimination as a result, they and all who believed them not to be sinners were to be excluded from the

111 Cf. the description of marriage rituals in Bernshtam, 'Svadebnaya obryadnost'...'; Gura, 'Opyt vyyavleniya struktury...'; Rabinovich, Ocherki etnografii, pp.211-243; and Chizikova, 'Svadebnaya obryadnost'....'.

community (112). Another denunciation of the Moscow Pomoryan marriages was presented to the Vyg father by the leader of the Moscow Theodosians, Il'ya Alekseevich Kovylin. This may have happened before the foundation of the chapel, as it is known that Kovylin visited Vyg in 1770. As a consequence of this denunciation, Emel'yanov was summoned to Vyg for explanations and his doctrine of marriage was condemned (113). Emel'yanov does not seem to have taken much notice of this condemnation, at least not for long, because as we have seen already in 1774 he founded a chapel and kept there a register of marriages. Not surprisingly, he was summoned again by the Vyg fathers. In January 1777, another council was held at Vyg in order to examine Emel'yanov's teachings. The members of the council excluded once again the possibility of marriage and reaffirmed that Pomoryans could not share food and prayers with followers of Ivan Alekseev's doctrines and with Old Believers who otherwise entered into marriage. The severity of this resolution was balanced stating that, regardless of how their unions had been sanctioned, married people could be fully reunited with the church on condition that, though living under the same roof, they abstained from physical intercourse and submitted to an ecclesiastical penance of forty days (114). This cannot be

112 Daniil Matveev, Blagotvoritel'yu i drugu nashemu, October 1769

113 I. Nil'sky, op.cit., p.220.

114 Sobornoe postanovlenie Vygoreskikh obshchezhitel'ey o novozhenakh, ff.97-107. The council drafted five articles concerning marriage. In the introduction it was observed that in many Pomoryan communities the number of young married couples was increasing.

considered a very severe condemnation of marriage, as it allowed for a couple to be recognised and accepted by the community, if not in the early stage of the marriage, then later on. As for Emel'yanov, he ignored the Vyg resolutions and continued as before his activity in the chapel.

It can be surmised that the council of 1777 in Vyg had been convoked in response to an inquiry, or a denunciation of the Pokrovskaya submitted by Moscow Theodosians who were alarmed at the number of defections from the Preobrazhenskoe community to the Pokrovskaya. In fact, among the signatures appended to the 1777 resolution Petr Fedorov's name is to be found. If he went to Vyg on Kovylin's instructions, he failed to fulfill his commission: in fact Kovylin, annoyed by the slackness of the Vyg resolutions against the marriages of the Pokrovskaya chapel, asked him to withdraw his signature. Kovylin had not failed to notice that the condemnation of all forms of marriages had been more perfunctory than real. After he received a copy of the 1777 resolutions he wrote to Petr Feodorov, speaking in the name of "the true love of wisdom" that it was wrong to put on the same level starozheny and novozheny, those who had been married by heretics and those who had come together by their own private initiative when already baptised and refusing the prohibition of marriage. The Theodosians had had their first disagreement with Vyg on the question of the starozheny, whom they had accepted on the basis of St. Paul's epistle to the Corinthians; now Kovylin thought it wrong that people who had been married uncanonically should have their unlawful unions recognized by permission to

live together, albeit in chastity. Kovylin argued that such a permission would give opportunities to sin in secret under the inducements of the "culpable fire which burns mercilessly the Christian soul". He suspected that the object of the 1777 resolutions was the creation of a means by which marriage could de facto be allowed without compromising the doctrine officially held at Vyg: "like foxes, the Vyg fathers were trying to blur their tracks with their tails" (115). If Kovylin was right, then Emel'yanov was perfectly justified in deciding not to pay any attention to the 1777 resolutions. Besides, fortunately for him, from 1780 until 1791 Vyg was under the leadership of Andrey Borisovich (1734-1791), who was well disposed to him, sharing his ideas about marriage and kept him among the wardens of the Vyg community (116). That Borisov was sympathetic to Emel'yanov's doctrine is reflected in the praise lavished on him by Lyubopytny: "he was a scholarly man, talented and firm, a well-known writer on moral questions, a composer of homilies and of histories of the church, an excellent vanquisher of brakoborchestvo, which infected the populace", he was a good administrator of his church, and "frequently denounced the mistakes of the Theodosians and crude Nikonians". Andrey Borisovich was indeed a man not to be intimidated; like Kovylin, he entertained excellent relations with the authorities, and he is credited among Old Believers with a key role in the abolition of the double poll-tax and the discontinuation in public places

115 I.A.Kovylin, Pis'mo ... Petru Fedorovu v Pomor'e, pp.49-55.

116 P.O.Lyubopytny, Khronologiya Vygoretskoy kinovii..., p.204.

of the injurious term "schismatic" (raskolnik) (117).

Andrey Borisov's connivance with Emel'yanov's marriages could not have met with universal approval. It cannot be excluded that the fire of 1787 that burnt down the churches and chapels of Vyg was interpreted by the opponents of his matrimonial policy as a divine punishment for an uncanonical liberalism on the question (118). Whatever happened, no sooner was Borisov dead in 1791, that Emel'yanov was summoned to Vyg and asked for an explanation of his Moscow practices. Vyg was now under the leadership of Arch~~h~~ishop Dement'ev (119).

In 1792, Emel'yanov arrived at Vyg, and a council was held. Although there were still some who shared his views and those of the previous nastoyatel', there was an articulate, belligerent group which succeeded in pushing through a condemnation of the Moscow matrimonial practice. One of its leaders was Timofey Andreev (1745-1809), who spent his apparently notorious eloquence against Vasily Emel'yanov. Significantly, he enjoyed great personal authority over the Moscow Theodosian community, which frequently asked his advice on theological and dogmatic questions. He was in fact extremely well-read, the author of treatises defending the Old Believers against the Nikonians and particularly concerned to heal the split between the Vyg

117 Lyubopytny, op.cit., pp.51-52.

118 Andrey Borisov composed four homilies on this event (Druzhinin, nn.5-8). On the fire, see D. Ostrovsky, Vygovskaya pustyn', p.102.

119 Lyubopytny, Khronologiya..., p.204.

community and the Theodosians, to which end he wrote a history of how the disagreement came about (120). Timofey Andreev decided to agree with the Theodosians that the substance of marriage and the source of its legitimacy was the ordained priesthood and that the only marriages which could be considered canonical were those celebrated in a church which like the one before the schism was complete of all three ranks (121). It would be very interesting to know what course the discussion took at the council of 1792. Unfortunately, only the text of the final resolutions has been preserved, that states: on the question of marriage adhere to the views of our previous fathers Daniil Vikulin, Andrey and Semen Denisov, and the others after them; unless celebrated by a priest in the course of an Orthodox liturgy, these marriages cannot be considered to have been celebrated in compliance with the perfect form required by the church; services cannot be celebrated for those who have married after conversion, and what has not been blessed by the church is not to be blessed; married people must not be accepted in our society; they can only be admitted later on, once they will agree to live in chastity and will take an oath to atone for their misdeed; a final excommunication is to be pronounced against those who affirm the validity of Emel'yanov's marriages; if they wish to regain admission, they are to abstain completely from discussion and broadcasting of their views on marriage. Emel'yanov had to

120 T.Andreev, O nachale razdora.

121 Lyubopytny, Istoricheskiy slovar', p.183.

submit to the decision of the sobor and appended his signature to these resolutions. He also agreed no longer to discuss his unorthodox views on the question of Antichrist (122).

The Moscow Pomoryans had entrusted Vasily Emel'yanov in 1792 before his departure with a letter to the Vyg fathers in which they were asking them to show some indulgence towards the Moscow practice and accept married couples without excommunications regardless of how they had been united in marriage. After the council of 1792 the Vyg fathers gave Vasily Emel'yanov their reply which was addressed "to our Christ-loving brothers who live among the soul-corrupting temptations of the world" (123). In the letter the Vyg fathers agreed that the Church did have seven sacraments, marriage among them; but this could be celebrated only by a priest, for the same reason why priests could be ordained only by bishops. The attributes, necessary and substantial, of the ceremonies celebrated by the Moscow Pomoryans, i.e., God's call to be fruitful and multiply, the reciprocal vow of the spouses, and the blessing of the parents were considered important, but not enough by the Vyg fathers "in consideration of the liturgy" (124). The Vyg fathers did not accept that the church ceremony (venchanie) had been established exclusively for the sake of "ecclesiastical sumptuousness", for without it "marriage cannot be honourable and the bed is impure" (125). They asked their Moscow coreligionists if they really, in full

122 See Bozhieyu pomoshchiyu, ff.37-39.

123 Posrede prelestey dushetlennykh mira sego, 1792, f.1.

124 Ibid., f.2v.

125 Ibid., f.3.

conscience, could believe a marriage to be canonical if celebrated without a priest; surely, they ought to feel how daring such a proposition is in front of God and what a cause of perdition it can constitute to the weak. The best course would be simply to admit the transgression of canon law and repent for having entered into an uncanonical marriage, i.e., the Vyg fathers seemed to share with the Theodosians the belief in the necessity of substituting confession for marriage. In a somewhat affectionate and simple way they suggested

"as it is doubtful whether this sacrament can be celebrated without an Orthodox priest, why don't you just wait a little at the church gates, pass judgement on yourself, and, having entered the cell of your soul, meditate there on how, because of your weakness, you have transgressed the canons of the church. And on account of this transgression sigh, shed tears, and repent, so that your soul may be healed, and you can return to the Christian flock with a pure conscience" (126).

Only by the contrition of the heart could Christians hope to find forgiveness in God; besides, they should be contented with the consideration that "in this sorrowful time when there is no legitimate priesthood" the fruit of the womb is considered legitimate at least by the civil laws, and sons and daughters could inherit their parents' property without any dishonour, in spite of the fact that their parents had not been married by an Orthodox priest, and were dishonoured sinners inside the church; it was only fair that a punishment should be willingly accepted so that the soul could achieve salvation: "And

126 Ibid., f.4.

you will stay by the gates of the church like the publican, without daring to look at anybody, and crying without interruption to your creator 'God be merciful to me sinner!'

Some will do this for a year, some for two, six, ten or twelve years, while others will have to do this until the very end of their lives" (127).

It is not difficult to imagine how unpleasant it must have been for sober merchants and stately patriarchs to have to endure this act of expiation for having a family at all. But the Vyg fathers thought there was nothing particularly embarrassing and offensive in an act of atonement which merely rendered God his due. When attending church ceremonies behind a special curtain, or having meals at a separate table, married people ought to be grateful for the opportunity they were being given of singing praises to God in the same temple as the sinless faithful. The act of repentance made it possible for them to be incorporated in the Christian community, to partake of the joys of the church, God's forgiveness of the sinners would be secured by the prayers of "the God loving and extremely old men who live in chastity" (128). Thus the ultimate *raison d'être* of the sobor, or permanent council of elders leading a chaste life of virtue, was to intercede for the lay members of the community and appease the deity, like the vestal virgins of ancient Rome, with the sacrificial offer of their virtue.

127 Ibid., f.5-v.

128 Ibid., f.5.

A story has it that Emel'yanov was forced to subscribe to these resolutions in Vyg under the threat not to be released from a cellar in which he had been imprisoned (129). Be that as it may, on his return to Moscow, Emel'yanov decided again to ignore Vyg's orders. It can be surmised that he had second thoughts. It would not have been easy to condemn unions which he had previously blessed, or disappoint the expectations of those who wanted to be united in marriage by him. According to an account of the events, Emel'yanov realized that, had he complied with Vyg's orders, he would have thrown his flock either towards the Nikonians, or forced them into the Theodosian sinful way of life; besides, he questioned the Vyg fathers who placed the monastic ideal before "the Holy Scriptures and Reason". It was very easy for the Vyg fathers, in whose community there were no women, and where everything was arranged so as to suit monastic life; but they would be of a different mind if they were to live in Moscow, the New Babylon, where one was exposed to all sort of temptations, and where one could not help meeting women all the time; "and we know it is easier to see the devil, than a virtuous woman" (130). Emel'yanov continued therefore to preach in favour of marriage and to celebrate marriages in his chapel; he was also duly condemned. In 1797 the resolutions of 1777 were reiterated at Vyg (131).

129 K.Golubov (Istoricheskoe izveshchenie..., p.27), himself a supporter of marriage, writes that Emel'yanov actually visited Vyg without any idea of what was in the air for him; he was then imprisoned and forced to renounce his ideas; I.Nil'sky, op.cit., p.221n does not believe the story.

130 I. Nil'sky, op.cit., pp.224-225.

131 Ibid., p.225.

The condemnation of Emel'yanov, and the unresolved tension between the stern prescriptions emanating from Vyg and the newly acquired perception on the part of the Moscow Pomoryans of their needs and possibly of their rights created a stimulating background for discussion. In fact one cannot help but wonder at the wealth of manuscripts produced by these merchants in the course of the dispute. True, most of the ideas put forward were not particularly original: some had already been anticipated by Ivan Alekseev, while Lyubopytny as it will be shown in the next chapter, is the only author to my knowledge who, after Alekseev, attempted to deal systematically with the subject. Yet there was something new: the freshness and the popularity with which the issue was discussed.

(Pomoryan writings on marriage)

Some Old Believer merchants were very busy with their business and found it strenuous to write extensively. One, for instance, expressed his discomfort with the following terms:

"Without love, nobody will ever be allowed to see God, say the Holy Scriptures. For this reason I will not refuse to take into consideration your proposition ... in accordance with the strength of my reason, and I will satisfy your request, although I do not have the time for this, as you know. For I am tied by wordly preoccupations, that is, by trade, the administration of my household, exhausting red-tape in the offices, the payment of taxes, the care of my wife and a great deal of effort to feed and clothe my family and myself" (132).

But even this Old Believer unknown to us who had so precious little time ended up writing quite extensively to answer the

132 Otvely na devyat' voprosov bezpopovtsam o molenii za tsarya, f.1-v.

objections proposed to him. I shall now devote some attention to the writings of other Old Believers who took part in the debate on marriage.

Aleksey Yakovlevich Zayatsevsky (1759-1803) was a merchant of Zaraysk. Lyubopytny praised him both as a polemicist, a cantor and as the architect, among other buildings, of the Pokrovskaya chapel, but he disagreed with his view that non-Old Believers could also be called pious (133). He wrote on the subject of marriage a tract, Slovo uveshchatel'noe o zakonnom brake (134). He made his case with arguments taken both from the Holy Scriptures and from nature, as Lyubopytny commented approvingly (135). In his treatise Zayatsevsky argued that chastity cannot be forced on all and sundry, but must be chosen freely by the individual concerned. "The lust of the flesh exists and will be in eternity, and it has been implanted by the Omnipotent Creator not in order to keep all in a chaste life outside marriage, by means of a restriction which it is above the power of human will to bear, but in order that, by means of it, the human species should be fruitful and multiply". Zayatsevsky argued that God's commandments do not undergo a change in nature. In the animal world

"The succession of the species [preemstvo rodov] is observed by similarity: the horse creates a horse as his successor, a lion another lion, an eagle, another

133 Lyubopytny, Istoricheskiy slovar', pp.70-71.

134 I.Nil'sky, op.cit., p.235 (Druzhinin n.3?). He also wrote on the subject of Nikonian baptism, against the priestly Old Believers and against Metropolitan Platon of Moscow (Druzhinin nn. 1,2,4).

135 Lyubopytny, Iz knigi dvopolozhnika, in Appologiya, f.121.

eagle, and at no time are the characteristics of the animals lost, but it is as if they were structured anew each time in the flow of nature. But if speechless animals, thanks to God's benediction, continue and will continue their existence, for all creatures in earth and in the water, all who fly in the air are born and give birth in their turn, live and die, leaving an offspring of their own kind, how is it that Man, who was created in God's image and similitude and was, what is more, purified by God's precious blood, should be deprived of this benediction of God's and have to endure great need from the burning of the flesh and have to carry a burden which not all can endure?" (136).

Zayatsevsky was thus accusing the Theodosians of trying to alter the unchangeable laws of nature at grave risk; from the Annales Ecclesiasticae of Cardinal Cesare Baronius (1538-1607), he recalled how the 591 disposition of Pope Gregory I, that churchmen should abstain from marriage, resulted in the murder of six thousand infants whose bodies were drowned in order to hide the evidence of sin.

"An exclusively chaste life can be admitted only as an extremely rare phenomenon. The strength and power of lust is so high, that it can be resisted only by those who are particularly inspired by God's grace on account of their great deeds and achievements, and great virtue. But we can see that even those chosen by God, who live far from the world and have thaumaturgic gifts, who were most renowned men and well-advanced in old age, would become captive of natural lust and could not oppose their falling into the vices of passion ... and such great men, who had removed themselves from the world, lived in hermitages, ate simple berries and humble food, quenched their thirst with nothing but ordinary water, slept on bare ground and wore bad clothes, would nevertheless fall prey to the torrents of bodily passions, defeated by the inborn inclination to copulate" (137).

136 Quoted by I.Nil'sky, op.cit., p.233.

137 Ibid., p.234.

Zayatsevsky argued therefore that it was most unlikely that Theodosians living in rich houses, well-fed and well-clothed could be better equipped than those hermits to resist the temptations of the flesh. "If lawful unions can be forbidden, a great many foul actions could take place, vile and revolting vices could emerge, the human race will be exterminated and illegalities not less reproachable than those of Sodom and Gomorra will spread. For people are not made of stone, what has been implanted in them by nature cannot be eliminated, and they have a capacity to produce other beings such as they are" (138). Zayatsevsky, as well as writing this polemical treatise, did not hesitate to defy the power of the Nikonian church. Platon Levshin, the Metropolitan of Moscow, had tried to annul the marriage of Vasily Fedorov Monin, the rich merchant who had provided the land on which the Pokrovskaya chapel had been built. Zayatsevsky wrote an Obyasnenie Platonu in which he defended that marriage in spite of its not having been celebrated by a priest of the dominant church; in any case, the church was not entitled to separate Monin from his wife. Zayatsevsky's explanation, according to Lyubopytny, was read in the Synod, and the question was settled to Monin's advantage (139).

Another writer on the question of marriage was Ivan Vasil'ev Anisimov, a Pomoryan who in 1815 became nastoyatel' of the Pokrovskaya chapel. He equated contempt of nature with contempt

138 Ibid., p.265. Zayatsevsky also refuted the Theodosian doctrine of the Last Days.

139 P.O. Lyubopytny, Istoricheskiy slovar', p.72.

for God the Creator and argued that chastity and virginity must be freely chosen.

"A virginal life leads man to perfection and pleases God only when Man abstains from marriage without any compulsion, in complete freedom; as soon as virginity becomes an obligation, it ceases to be a virtue and does not deserve any praise. Virginity is not achieved by not uniting in marriage. For only he can be called a virgin who, having the possibility of marrying, had decided not to do so. But when you forbid marriage, then that virtue is no longer a result of your choice, but of the compulsion of the law" (140).

The Theodosians were in this not unlike the eunuchs, argued Anisimov:

"Just as nobody can praise a eunuch because of his virginity, and for not being married, similarly nobody can praise you. For what they need do because of their nature, you do because of your corrupted conscience ... To whom can we compare you? To the Jews? No, for they respect marriage and give praise to God for His creation - while you have refused to heed Christ's voice, who through Paul has said that marriage is honourable and the bed is not impure. One can compare you only to the pagans. But even they would find you less pious than they are; for Plato the Philosopher states that he who has created the universe is good, and what is good cannot contain in itself anything evil".

Anisimov concluded that only the devil and his messengers could have inspired the Theodosians with the doctrine of universal virginity (141).

Perhaps the most beautiful and eloquent portrayal of the Pomoryans' conception of their place in the world is conveyed by

140 Quoted in I. Nil'sky, op.cit., p.238.

141 I.Nil'sky, op,cit., p.239, quoted from O razdelenii Khristian, written in 1815 in order to convert the Theodosian to the Pomoryan point of view.

an homily which belongs to a collection of 1809. Its author can be identified in Gavriil Ilarionovich Skachkov (1745-1821) who in 1795 succeeded Emel'yanov as head of the Moscow Pomoryans (142) and in 1798 obtained from Vyg the recognition of the marriages celebrated in Moscow (143). Skachkov wrote a few works against the Theodosians, criticizing them for their corrupted life outside marriage; the Theodosians in their turn felt threatened by the strict logic of his arguments (144). In 1809 Skachkov asked to be relieved from his position of nastoyatel' of the Moninskaya chapel, on the grounds that the pokrovtsy no longer led a decorous life; in 1810 his request was granted (145). His dissatisfaction with the lifestyle of his flock is reflected in the preface to the collection of homilies. Far from presenting a picture of fanaticism, Skachkov laments the modernity of the pokrovtsy, their independent and egoistic behaviour which seems to justify prophecies on the extinction of piety in the Last Days:

"And thus everyone goes as it pleases him to, and believes what he wants to believe, even in our own flock, whether it be unintentionally or from ignorance, or from pride and arrogance, they have started to go by two ways. And they want both to please God, and to be loved by vain, empty men. Some do even worse: ignoring

142 See Rech' Gavriila Larionova Skachkova his Questionnaire, and his Ispovedanie serdechnoe i ustnoe: in the latter Skachkov requests future Pomoryans to profess that in case of need marriage can take place without priesthood. On him, see P.N.Kh., 'Pamyati...'.
 143 See N.I.Kostomarov, Istoriiya raskola u raskol'nikov, p.520.

144 For Skachkov's criticism of the Theodosians, see A. Vishnyakov, 'Novozheny i brakobortsy', pp.96-97; on the apprehensions of the Theodosians, see V.T., 'Spory bezpopovtsev o brake', p.152.

145 See G.L.Skachkov, Proshenie ... ob uvolnenii, and Ustav ili pravila.

their direct calling, they observe a vile and interested silence in front of impiety and blasphemy [bogoborstvo], so that even if they live piously, they do not fare better than the impious ones whom they pass over in silence ... nobody teaches any longer what is good, nobody fears anything any longer, and everyone follows his own independent path" (146).

Appalled by the laxity of the Pomoryans, Skachkov collected 18 homilies, and requested each member of his flock to subscribe to the teachings contained in the homilies under threat of excommunication of those who did not subscribe (147). In relation to the subject of our inquiry the eighteenth homily, about marriage, is particularly important and can be considered a most reliable source. Significantly, the title of the homily stresses that marriage will last until the end of the world, and that it has not been given for a certain period only, "as many superstitious people claim"; marriage and feeding on meat can be allowed to Orthodox Christians while, for everything else, Christians are to follow the same prescriptions as those complied with by monks. The title of the homily makes it very clear that the dominant ideal was a monastic one, as the church had been extinguished, and that

146 G.L.Skachkov, Kratkoe sobranie ot svyashchennago i bozhestvennago pisanija, f.1.

147 The homilies were about the following subjects: faith; the second coming; God's mother; the cross; angels and archangels; the veneration of the ancestors and Fathers of the church; icons; religious festivals; the visible church; the respect of traditions; the avoidance of heretics; the persecution of the holy immaterial church since the times of Abel; the endurance of misfortunes; against those who expect Elijah and Enoch to come physically; Antichrist; the last days; the fulfillment of the prophecies of the Scriptures; marriage.

the laity was to be guided by monastic rules, the only exceptions being made for marriage and alimentionation. Christians are reminded that God gave two ways of salvation: marriage and virginity (148). Ideally virginity is to be preferred, and perfection can be achieved only in the observation of all monastic rules. But not everybody can put up with the burden of chastity - for those, there exists married life as a model of virtue in the respect of natural law, following a life style similar to the one of the just men of the Old Testament:

Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Job. They did not know the Gospel and had never heard any Christian teaching.

Nevertheless, by respecting natural law and having a natural understanding of justice, lived in the respect of the Evangelical precepts. "Although they lived surrounded by riches in all comforts, with wives and children, and had concern and care for their houses, their slaves and servants, none of these circumstances constituted an obstacle to their salvation" (149). One cannot but admire the choice of the model; nothing could have been more appropriate for affluent Old Believer merchants, who

148 Ibid., f.183v.

149 Ibid., f.184. At f.190 the concept of nature is shown to derive from the book of Genesis.

lived in patriarchal magnificence in a time when there no longer was a visible Christian church, than a comparison with the just biblical patriarchs of the times before Christ, who "loved God, fulfilled his will and listened to his voice from Heaven". They were the right example to follow, for "nowadays the Holy Scriptures are multiplied everywhere, and the evangelical truths are flourishing". Virginity was acknowledged as a superior way of life: that was how Adam and Eve lived before sin. This reminder, apart from constituting a traditional Christian belief, also served the disciplinarian purpose of keeping the lay community in a position of moral subordination towards the sobor composed of elderly men who had taken a vow of chastity (150).

Skachkov stressed the dignity of married life considering that there is a sin which is far worse than lust: namely avarice (srebrolyubie), while what is induced by nature cannot of itself be evil, for Nature has been created by God (151). Copulation in itself is not an evil, but it is reproachable and dangerous for one's salvation to try and please one's wife more than God. Sin does not stem from nature, but from the Devil and from bad habits:

150 Ibid., f.185. At the end of the eighteenth century some books had been printed, in which it had been argued that already in the garden of Eden Adam and Eve had lived like husband and wife, marriage having been instituted by God for the propagation of the human species. This presentation of the story of the creation of Eve was in keeping with the populationist policies of the period. See Svyashchennaya istoriya Vetkhago i Novago Zaveta, St.Petersburg, 1778, pp.799; Svyashchennaya istoriya, St. Petersburg 1763, pp.4-5; Svyashchennaya istoriya, Moscow, 1799, pp.2-3.

151 Ibid., ff.185v, 189.

"for God has put an inclination in our natures to love each other. For all animals love their like, and every human being loves another human being sincerely devoted to him. Consider how virtue itself finds its seeds in nature, which are inside us, while sin and evil are not from nature, but are in our bad customs and morals which induce us to sin, the envy of our enemy who tempts us to sin ... Do not say it is the violence of lust which leads into adultery. For lust has been given for the generation of an offspring, and to continue life, and not for adultery and sin ... Don't blame lust, for lust is not a sin. Adultery comes from falling into excess: it is not a sin which derives from natural lust, for lust's only aim is intercourse, and not such an intercourse which shall entail a breach of the law" (152).

Having thus cleared natural lust from the imputation of sinfulness, the homily proceeds to state that "he who fights against marriage, fights against the very God the Lord" and condemns Him who has established it. For it is a sacrament of the church". St.Paul said that marriage is a great sacrament because it is a symbol of the union of Christ with the Church. Marriage is a "primeval and natural law" by which all men have been regulated since creation "like from the strongest of strongholds". It has regulated men's lives since Adam's times, and it is a law which God had given to the whole of humanity.

152 Ibid., f.189v.

"For we see how the barbarians, and the Hellenes and all the infidel people have this law, and observe it strictly, and those pagans who have no law, and are not enlightened by their conscience, do nevertheless lawful things guided by nature, for these who do not have a law are a law unto themselves: they do lawful things, which are inscribed into their hearts: instead of the law, they have their conscience and their reason. For God has created Man sufficiently inclined to virtue, and to escape from evil. He has put all in our nature, and enlightened us by our conscience, as to what we should do and what we should avoid".

God's providence looks after Man and cares not only for the faithful "but also for the unfaithful" (153). In the present apocalyptic times, continues Skachkov, there are some heretics who deny marriage. They are inspired by the Devil. Those who want to lead a chaste life must pray God that he free them not only from sin, but also from evil thoughts; for this reason marriage is preferable to burning (154).

The homily concludes with an exhortation to a moderate and virtuous life:

"If nature makes you experience some need, then marry, have children, go to the baths, wash yourself there, and go to the market, have servants to serve you, and have everything you need. Only, in everything, have with measure of your wife, as well as of everything else. Use with moderation of marriage, and you will be the first in the kingdom of God, and will enjoy all heavenly bliss" (155).

153 Ibid., ff.191v-192v.

154 Ibid., ff.134-136.

155 Ibid., f.137v.

No advice could have been more welcome to a wealthy, sensible merchant. As for their wives, the homily offered them the example of two holy Egyptian women, whom their husbands had not allowed to retire to a monastery: they lived therefore in town, in their homes, had frequent intercourse with their husbands, and by their care and attention for their family pleased God more than if they had excelled in "fasting, praying and all-night vigils" (156). Conversely, bad wives could endanger their husband's salvation by demanding too much from them. It is, indeed, "a great misfortune" when the husband acts in everything in accordance with his wife's will;

"great toil, great suffering, great burden and chain for the husband, when his wife is evil, malicious, and quarrelsome. One must teach and restrain such a wife, and inspire in her the fear of God, and proper submission. For it is an unbreakable duty for each husband to teach his wife the law of God, and strengthen her in the Orthodox faith, in good customs and submission so that she will be the ruler of the house, and the wife will not spend all her time adorning herself, will not demand too many clothes, and will not want to establish her superiority over her husband, but will be docile and obedient, and will submit in everything to her husband, like the body to the head. And the husband will make his wife similar to him ... and if she will not obey, he will punish her, by the power given to him by God".

156 Ibid., ff.198-199. The example is taken from the Minei Chet'i, January 19th.

If the husband will succeed in taming his wife, her salvation will be assured. Wrong are those who write against marriage that he who has a wife will not be saved (157).

Skachkov concluded his homily by pointing out that he had not written it out of whim, or for his own personal glory, but from the Holy Scriptures and in order to bring his flock to salvation. His hearers were exhorted to follow and imitate the just Abraham, who left his land full of infidelities, and his own father to settle in the land indicated to him by God, where he lived in virtue and fear of God, in spite of the people without faith who surrounded him (158).

(Councils between the Moscow Pomoryans and Theodosians)

Pomoryans and Theodosians held conflicting views on marriage. Councils would be held, jointly or separately in order to discuss such differences and often reinforce them. Early in 1781, a council met at Preobrazhenskoe at which Pomoryan practices and

157 Ibid., ff.200v,202v. On the theme of bad wives in Russian literature see e.g., A.M. Panchenko, 'Zlatoe igo supruzhestva'.

158 Ibid., f.205.

all novozheny were condemned (159). In February and March of the same year another Vyg practice was condemned; the Theodosian Petr Fedorov was asked by Kovylin to examine the Eucharist bread produced at Vyg with fragments of bread baked before the schism by the Solovki fathers and consider its acceptability. The council failed to reach a unanimous decision on the matter, but Petr Fedorov advised nevertheless to abstain from the Sacrament for the purpose of enacting the prophecy that in the time of Antichrist the Eucharist will no longer be available to Christians (160). Apparently the question had aroused popular passions and divided opinions at Preobrazhenskoe. Petr Fedorov's judgement that in the Last Days a "burning desire" is enough to achieve salvation, while the material ~~bread~~ can no longer be available because of the nature of Time is interesting in the context of the disputes about marriage for it shows in one more case how determined the Theodosians were to enact fully the great drama of the Kingdom of Antichrist. The prophecies about the life of Christian humanity before Christ's second coming had been taken as a blueprint, as it were, to dictate the nature and

159 Kratkoe izyavlenie, chego radi, Moscow, 1791; f.205.

160 See Ponezhe ot bozhiya popushch n yao on the Preobrazhenskoe congress of 19 February-2 March 1791. See also I.Nil'sky, 'O Preobrazhenskom moskovskom kladbishche'. At this council the question of the inscription on the cross was also discussed, and the Moscow Theodosians made peace with the St.Petersburg Filipponians on condition of abandoning the four-letter inscription.

rules of behaviour to which Christians were to conform in order to be good and pious actors on the sacred stage. Thus, when the council met at Vyg to discuss, as seen earlier, the marriages celebrated by Vasily Emel'yanov in the Pokrovskaya chapel, tension with Preobrazhenskoe was high. If Vasily Emel'yanov was rebuked for his theory and practice of marriage, this may also have been in order to establish a better relationship between Vyg and Preobrazhenskoe. That this was indeed so is an impression also supported by the circumstances of the 1807 contacts between Kovylin and the Moscow Pomoryans; the latter seemed to be extremely keen that their doctrines and practice should be approved of by the Theodosians. In part this concern on the part of the Pomoryans was due to their fear that they might lose access to the Preobrazhenskoe cemetery. Kovylin had in fact made the permission to use Preobrazhenskoe as a burying place conditional on the abandonment of the practice and justification of marriage, had gone as far as to dishonour some of the Pomoryan graves, breaking their crosses and pulling down their monuments to the ground. The Pomoryans decided therefore to try and come to terms once more with Kovylin. To this end they wrote an epistle in which they expressed their wish to "put an end to the reciprocal disagreement, spread general Holy Love and resume peace" (161). This overture gave Kovylin hope that the moment had come when he could finally force the Pomoryans to conform fully to the Theodosian doctrine of marriage; the Pomoryans, on

161 I.Nil'sky, Semeynaya zhizn', pp.272-275. See also Druzheskiye Izvestiya, f.37.

their part, were hoping that Kovylin would at least let them make use of the cemetery irrespective of their doctrinal deviation. In 1807 Kovylin commissioned Gnusin to write an Ekstrakt, or summary and refutation of the main points of the Pomoryan doctrine of marriage. He intended to use the Fkstrakt as a blueprint for discussion at a council. The Pomoryans were summoned to Preobrazhenskoe on 10 March 1807, and were met by Kovylin, who, like the unquestioned boss that he was, expected the Pomoryans to abandon all the points of their doctrine as summed up in the Ekstrakt. It is reported that he opened the council by asking: "When will you stop marrying, and pledge yourselves not to live with wives, not to generate any offspring, and agree with us in everything?" (162). The Pomoryan representative at the council, a merchant called Zaikin, objected that this was not the type of discussion they had come for. He was silenced by an enraged Kovylin. To the Pomoryans' request that he accept an open discussion of their doctrine instead of just abusing them, Kovylin, in what was perhaps a reference to the 1791 council, retorted by asking: "By which words of the Holy Eucharist is the transformation of the bread in Christ's body and blood achieved?" The Pomoryans gave the correct answer, after which Kovylin proceeded to read the Ekstrakt. The Pomoryans found the summary of their doctrines presented in the Ekstrakt inaccurate. Understandably, they refused to comply with Kovylin's request that they renounce their doctrines in writing. They proceeded then to explain their argument, the pivot of which

162 I. Nil'sky, op.cit., p.276.

was Paul's words concerning the dignity of marriage. The Theodosians, for their part, considered irrelevant the quotation from the Scriptures, for "now we live in a different time, there are no longer any Apostles, and their writings no longer have the force of irrefutable authority". Some Theodosians allegedly shouted in addition that "better to have intercourse with a hundred mares, than have one wife under the pretense of legitimate marriage", to which the Pomoryans commented that such an argument was worthy of "pastors-Bucephalus" and they left the assembly (163). On 21 April 1807 Kovylin decided to resume discussion with the Pomoryans and ask them to come to Preobrazhenskoe to listen to a new summary of alleged Pomoryan doctrines, a new Ekstrakt. On 23 April the Pomoryans received Kovylin's proposals; the new Ekstrakt consisted of a collection of quotations from various ecclesiastical books about the substance and the attributes of marriage. The Pomoryans judged the quotations to be inaccurate, and so culled as to obscure the real meaning of the texts quoted (164). Nevertheless the Pomoryans, who were still very keen to come to an understanding with the master of Preobrazhenskoe, prepared a Predvaritel'noe mnenie in eight points, in which they expressed their views on the nature and the reasons of the disagreement and put forward suggestions on how to breach it. They wrote that they deemed the

163 Ibid., pp.277-280. Nil'sky bases his story on a Pomoryan text, Istoriya o byvshem s Il'ieyu A.K. razgovore pomorskago soglasiya Khristian o proishedshem nesoglasiem mnenii so storony Feodosian, yako by nyne krome braka rod chelovechskii sushchestvo svoego bytiya dolzhen imet'. See also K.Nadezhdin, op.cit., p.252f.

164 Druzheskiye Izvestiya, ff.6-7.

Theodosians to be Orthodox Christians, that they did not call them heretics or Schismatics on account of the disagreement about prayers for the authorities and the perfection of legitimate marriage, because "this disagreement is not due to any rejection on their part of the Holy Canons, but arises only because of zeal and apprehension lest they might unwittingly give recognition to something which is not allowed". As there was agreement on fundamental truths the Pomoryans recognised the sacraments of baptism and confession administered by them. They concluded *by* expressing their desire of reaching a peaceful settlement by referring both to the Canons and to common sense (165). Kovylin rejected the proposals of the Pomoryans, and ruled that only the new Ekstrakt should be read at the forthcoming council. To the objections of the Pomoryans he is said to have replied, "Can't you see these walls? Don't they belong to my building? What have you got to say to me? I'll have you dragged in such a place in which you will moan for the rest of your life". According to the Pomoryan narrator of the council, these words marked the end of the reunion; the reading was interrupted and all returned to their homes (166). The Pomoryans were not satisfied with this state of affairs. On 22 September 1808 they attempted a resumption of talks with Preobrazhenskoe (167). The Pomoryans were by now more aware than ever of Kovylin's despotic ways, and showing a preoccupation that, with the benefit of much hindsight,

165 I. Nil'sky, op.cit., pp.278-279.

166 Ibid., p.279-280.

167 Druzheskiye izvestiya, ff.8-18.

compels a comparison with the Mensheviks of 1903, they insisted that the discussion be kept open and that there be as many participants as possible. The organizational aspect of the discussion seems actually to have been a most prominent concern of theirs, an indication that they did not trust Kovylin and knew how little he let himself be bound by unspoken rules of fair-play. They drafted 20 articles and they recommended that the gathering should not be confined to a small number of people, as the question touched upon were of a very general concern. They also insisted that complete calm, peace and modesty from both sides should reign during the council, and that both parties should show respect to the other. Disciplinary measures would be taken against those who transgressed against the above suggested order. No objections could be raised during the reading of the articles from either side: for the purpose of the council was "not logomachy, but exclusively an exchange of explanations". Kovylin did not reply, and the Pomoryans wrote a second address on 12 October 1808, and a third one on 27 October 1808, in which they tried again to persuade Kovylin of the necessity for a discussion (168). "Every truth can be expressed and remain perfected in the fullness of its truth only then, when, in connection to all which is demanded by it and all which pertains to it, whether substantially or attributively, it is revealed and explained" wrote the Pomoryans in their third address in an attempt to convince Kovylin of the philosophical necessity for a discussion, and of the impossibility of

168 Ibid., ff.19-24.

ascertaining the truth without subjecting it to an examination.

Christians, argued the Pomoryans, should be willing to discuss their views. Otherwise, they would lay themselves open to the criticism of being "impure, false and dishonest", that Christianity is "a captive of deceit and false doctrines". One wonders if they were referring to the criticism of Christianity, so widespread in their time, and if they had been upset by it to the extent of feeling a new approach and to be taken. The Pomoryans believed that the Theodosians, in the name of Christianity and for the sake of its credibility and prestige, should not refuse to engage in a discussion with them, so that unanimity could be restored and the body of Christian doctrine could be presented to outside critics as a homogenous whole composed of mutually harmonizing parts. Respectfully, the third address concluded expressing trust in the Theodosians' good disposition and concern for the salvation of souls, a hint, perhaps, that they were still hoping to regain access to the cemetery of which they had been already deprived for a year.

The Pomoryans had exhausted their patience, and this time they were determined that they should have the satisfaction of a reply. They made sure that Kovylin should be seen to receive their message, and arranged things so that their messenger should put it in his own hands, "v sobstvennye ruki", to use the expression customarily associated with petitions to the Tsars.

On 25 October 1808, the Pomoryan Lavrenty Fedotov called on Kovylin, and placed in his hands this third address. Kovylin knew perfectly well what it was all about, and without even opening it, he tore the envelope in minute pieces, after which he proceeded to imprint it on the face of the unfortunate messenger by means of vigorous slaps. Lavrenty Fedotov went back with a heavily bruised face. Two of Kovylin's assistants who happened to be present at this outburst of their master's wrath were deeply shocked (169). After this, a breach between the two parties became inevitable. The Pomoryans announced it on 12 November 1808 in an homily to their congregation called Vozveshchenie nashemu sosloviyu (170). In this proclamation the Theodosians were accused of having wanted the discussion, but having then acted in such a way as to force a breach. The congregation learnt of the three failed attempts at contacting Kovylin, of his violent reaction. All this to prove how good the intentions of the Pomoryans had been, and how badly they had been received; Kovylin was accused of sinful belligerence, lack of concern with the peace of the church and its unity, and indulging his "wilful whims". The Theodosians had proved that their hearts were incapable of responding to peaceful gestures, whereas the Pomoryans envisaged themselves in the positive role of peace-makers and apostolic edifiers of souls. Evidently the Pomoryans felt a need to justify the break in front of the congregation, an indication that, in spite of the disagreement on the question of

169 Ibid., ff.25-v.

170 Ibid., ff.27-37.

marriage, Preobrazhenskoe was held in great authority and respect by the congregation of Moscow Pomoryans, who felt a dependence on it and wished not to lose access to its burying ground. The proclamation gives another hint, that the leaders of both groups preferred on the whole to keep up a facade of mutual agreement in front of their respective congregations and did not wish their differences to become the subject of esoteric disputes at the, as it were, grass-roots level. After 1808 the Theodosians became even more uncompromising in their rejection of marriage. In a later chapter it will be seen how this uncompromising position influenced government policy against the Old Believers.

(The St. Petersburg Theodosians)

The Preobrazhenskoe community kept in touch with all other Theodosian centres in Russia and abroad, and regarded itself as the most important of them, the one which enjoyed the aura of the ancient capital of the Tsars. All other Theodosians were expected to accept a position of subordination and accept the Preobrazhenskoe leadership in disciplinary and dogmatic matters. A relationship of this kind existed with Yaroslavl', Zimogor'e, Krasnyi Kholm, Suzdal', Pskov, Riga and Tula. The nastoyateli of these communities would go to Moscow and pay homage to Kovylin, who would impress them with the sumptuous and complex organization of the Preobrazhenskoe community, the beauty of the religious services, the quality of the singing; Preobrazhenskoe was regarded by other provincial communities as a precious source of good singers. The supervision of Moscow was accepted in the choice of local leaders, with a few exceptions; for instance it is reported that the Vladimir Theodosians refused to accept the

authority of Moscow in this matter (171). Naturally Moscow attached great importance to its relationship with the Theodosians of St. Petersburg. For a long time the capital city built by Peter the Great had been regarded by Old Believers as an unsuitable place to live in. It was an antichristian, impure place, the embodiment of the rejection of the very culture and traditions upheld by the Old Believers. But eventually Old Believers began to settle there, while keeping themselves uncontaminated by the observance of strict rules of apartheid. In the second decade of the eighteenth century, allegedly there were as many as twelve thousand Old Believers in St. Petersburg (172). Filipp Fomich Kostsov (1737-1804) was to the St. Petersburg Theodosians what Kovylin was to the Moscow ones. Originally a peasant from the guberniya of Ryazan' he had eventually managed to raise his social status to that of merchant of the First Guild in St. Petersburg. Like Kovylin, he did not spare of his own means to let the Theodosian community prosper and be united in one single society. But, if one is to trust Lyubopytny, unlike Kovylin, the manner of this "rare and solid literalist, zealous for the faith", "valiant in fighting

171 Sinitsyn, Istoriya Preobrazhenskago kladbishcha, p.21.

Examples of the relationship of Preobrazhenskoe with other communities can be seen in Kniga otecheskoe zaveshchaniye.

172 V. Nil'sky, 'Feodoseevtsy v Peterburge', p.1; N.I. Kostomarov, op.cit., p.237. The Old Believers first moved to St. Petersburg in the 1760s; in 1762, 1784, 1789 and 1802 they were granted lands in the Okhta and Volkovo areas for the erection of cemeteries and churches. See TsGIA, fond 673, op. 2, n.62, O sostoyaniĭ raskola v Peterburge. Iz bumag Liprandi, f.1.

against edinoverie" was kind, peaceful and gentle; he had a pleasant and good-hearted way of addressing people, in his behaviour one could detect no wickedness, but an inclination to forgive, generosity especially towards the unfortunate and oppressed. He was held in great respect in both Vyg and St.Petersburg, for he "was always inspired solely by peacefulness, mildness, purity of heart, and piety" (173). In 1767 Kostsov bought some land near the Semenovskii bridge, and built a house with a small wooden chapel behind it. This area of St.Petersburg was one of the most densely populated with trading people. It was therefore a well-chosen spot to function as centre for all the St.Petersburg Theodosians, who before then were scattered all over the place. Kostsov's initiative was a success, and soon the wooden chapel was too small to house the whole Theodosian congregation. A new stone chapel had to be built inside Kostsov's courtyard, so as to be hidden by the walls. Yet, as well as the secrecy of the enterprise, there also was a keenness to feel that a time had come when the Theodosians could enjoy a degree of religious freedom in the capital of the Tsars. The new chapel, in honour of its founder was referred to as "Filippovskaya" or "Kostsovaya" (174).

173 Lyubopytny, Istoricheskiĭ slovar', p.187.

174 V.Nil'sky, op.cit., p.3-4. Kostsov had under his control all the arrivals and departures of Old Believers from the capital: TsGIA, fond 1473, op.16, no.1, f.317, deposition of the craftsman Luka Slavyaninov, himself of the Volkov kladbishche, of 12.11.1819; the choice of the leaders took place in the private chapel of Kostsov, in which 300 and more Old Believers could congregate at once: see TsGIA, fond 1473, op.14, no.1, Bumagi Feodosievskoy sekty, f.176.

Yet the need to have some more quiet and secluded place of worship was felt. In 1777 the St.Petersburg Theodosians Taras Ivanovich Vorob'ev and Volkov asked the authorities for permission to have a place of their own for the burial of their dead. A convenient location was suggested in Volkovo Pole, which was at the crossroads between Moscow, Krestetskii Yam and St.Petersburg; the authorities consented, and later in 1807 more land was granted to the Theodosians. There was a stone compound for women, where three two-story outbuildings (fligeli) were built; shelter was offered there to wanderers, passportless people, homeless of all kinds (175). By the time the government granted the permission to build a cemetery, one of the original petitioners, the St.Petersburg merchant Vorob'ev (1773 - still alive in 1828) had deserted the Theodosians and gone over to the Pomoryans. Theodosians continued to respect him for his vast erudition, but could no longer consider him for the organization of the Theodosian cemetery, which was taken over by Volkov and Kostsov. Profiting from the good disposition of the government, a stone almshouse with a chapel and various other buildings were erected. The cemetery grew more and more important, until it obscured the Kostsov chapel. Thanks to the numerous donations it received, it became very affluent, and extended its influence to the Theodosian communities of Novgorod and Riga (176). Kovylin was alarmed at the prosperity and independence of the St.Petersburg Theodosians. At some stage, after the foundation of the Volkovo

175 V. Nil'sky, op.cit., pp.5,22.

176 Lyubopytny, Istoricheskii slovar', pp.185-186. V. Nil'sky, op.cit., p.5.

cemetery, he began to insist that there should be frequent reunions and consultations between the Moscow and St.Petersburg Theodosians. He secured that they should take place at regular intervals, every three years, a regularity which was apparently observed during Kovylin's lifetime. In order to succeed in his ambition to be in close touch with St.Petersburg, Kovylin had stressed that there were in St.Petersburg many more Pomoryans than there were Theodosians, and that the solidarity of the community was therefore under threat. Deviations and acts of apostasy might have been difficult to avoid without keeping under the close scrutiny of Moscow (177). Kovylin stressed that in St.Petersburg there were no leaders experienced in dogmatic matters and in the nature of true Christianity, nobody capable of solving the doubts and answering the criticism levelled by the able Pomoryans. In particular he complained of the ignorance and poor reputation of the then nastavnik of the Volkovo cemetery (178). A conflict ensued from which the critics of the old nastavnik came out victorious; in 1778 they sent some of their representatives to Moscow, i.e., to Kovylin requesting the appointment of a new nastavnik. Kovylin chose Petr Fedorov, the prominent Theodosian who had participated in the drafting of the Pol'skii ustav, supervised the composition of the Chin Oglasheniya, and who was regarded in Moscow as perhaps the most scholarly and able polemicist and dogmatist. His appointment was indeed a great victory for Moscow; Kovylin could have the certainty that

177 Sinitsyn, Istoriya Preobrazhenskogo kladbishcha, p.20.

178 V. Nil'sky, op.cit., p.6.

his right arm was keeping close control of all that happened in St.Petersburg. This appointment amounted to a fusion of the Theodosians of the two capital cities, and could be regarded as a first step for the spreading of Theodosian doctrines and influence all over Russia (179). Petr Fedorov went to St.Petersburg accompanied by Fedor Nikiforov and by Kovylin, who wanted to make sure that Kostsov would accept the Moscow appointment. For a while, however, the Theodosians suffered a period of persecution during the reign of Paul I. Paul had found out through some priestly Old Believers who had joined edinoverie, that the Theodosians did not pray for the Imperial family, and that they had a centre in the capital (180). Paul ordered therefore that Kostsov be summoned and subjected to an "exhortation" by an Orthodox priest. Kostsov was adamant in refusing to abandon his faith and join edinoverie; he was therefore arrested and imprisoned in the fortress of Sts.Peter and Paul, where to humiliate him they shaved his beard. He remained there until the accession of Alexander I, when he was released surrounded by a halo of saintliness. Old Believers saluted in him a martyr for the cause of the true faith, and he was visited from admirers all over Russia (181). Maybe because of Kostov's enforced absence, Petr Fedorov found that alone he was not powerful enough to prevent the "infiltration" of ideas displeasing to Kovylin. In Kovylin's lifetime the most

179 Ibid., p.7.and p.8.

180 See N.S.Gur'yanova, 'Staroobryadcheskie sochineniya'.

181 V.Nil'sky, op.cit., pp.9-10; N.I.Kostomarov, op.cit., p.250.

prominent St.Petersburg Theodosians were Oshara and Kholin. Gerasim Nikitin Oshara (1752-1826) was, according to Lyubopytny, a serf belonging to the Sheremet'evs. Lyubopytny found him stubborn, vain, a "gross literalist", an "opponent of enlightened minds", enslaved by his partisan passions, a liar, and a stingy, niggardly man of an ugly and revolting appearance. His main activity in St.Petersburg was dedicated to preaching about the Apocalypse and the imminence of the Final Judgement. Thanks to his fanatical teachings he gained a great following in St.Petersburg among the populace, and also among some prominent Theodosians. The interest he actually aroused in the doctrine of Antichrist was so passionate, that the "price of the Book of the Apocalypse" quickly doubled. "Stupid fools", to dignify them with the epithet bestowed upon his followers by Lyubopytny, were intrigued by his doctrines, they all wanted to become "chatterboxes about Antichrist" and claimed to have secret visions of all sorts of miraculous events (182). Yakov Vasil'ev Kholin (1753-1820) impressed Lyubopytny more favourably. A Moscow merchant, he was a great teacher of the Riga and St.Petersburg Theodosians. He "had reached the first level of enlightenment", was an excellent writer, particularly effective against the Nikonians; on the other hand his acceptance of the theory that Napoleon was Antichrist was "most superstitious". Kholin was critical of the Theodosian doctrine of marriage. It is true that, according to Lyubopytny, his views on the subject were somewhat uncertain and only half-formulated, inconsistent and contradictory, and

182 Lyubopytny, op.cit., p.97.

that it was possible to detect in them "shades of superstition". For instance, he thought that Christians could not be considered to be legally married in the literary sense of the word and he wrote to Yaroslavl' exhorting local Theodosians to desist from the celebration of marriages. But on the whole he inclined to side with "scholarly men"; thus, thanks to him, "the great cities of Riga, Starodub and other places" were freed from the heresy of the brakobortsy and he "zealously tried to heal Moscow and Petropol, affected by that wrong and evil doctrine" (183). It would seem therefore that the regular consultations with Moscow, every three years, were not enough to ensure that the St.Petersburg Theodosians stuck to the Moscow doctrines.

At the council of 4 January 1791 between the St.Petersburg Theodosians and those Pomoryans who did not accept Emel'yanov's doctrines, Theodosian Orthodoxy was still upheld and Moscow approval of the resolutions of the council secured on 21 March

183 Lyubopytny, op.cit., pp.196-200.

1791 (184). But already in 1799 the St.Petersburg Theodosians took a more tolerant stance towards the novozheny; they would be allowed to take part in the life of the Christian community, to pray in the chapels as long as they kept within the boundaries of an area specially designed for them, to be admitted to confession in case of serious illness and to be admitted to regular confession after a purificatory fast of six weeks, if they would give proof of a virtuous and chaste life, and their spiritual father's guarantee (185). In January 1804, the St.Petersburg Theodosians received a reprimand from their Moscow coreligionists, who were urging them to break communion with the novozheny. This reprimand did not produce the desired effect, and it seems that more and more Theodosians were marrying. The only weapon in the hands of the nastavniki, the epitimiya, was no longer an effective deterrent. Only old folk would submit to it and perform the prescribed number of expiatory prostrations, while young people would just laugh it off. It was said that the way of life of St.Petersburg made it impossible to comply with the

184 Kniga otecheskoe zaveshchanie, chapter 11, ff.80-94. I. Nil'sky, p.30n erroneously indicates this source as Gnusin's Pandekty. See also Kniga opravdanie tserkovnogo soedineniya v Peterburge vernykh, 4 January 1791, ff.398-475.

185 Kniga otecheskoe zaveshchanie, chapter 25, ff.203v-204v.

requests of the nastavniki (186). In January 1809, the St.Petersburg Theodosians held a council. Kholin had a prominent place in formulating the resolutions of this council; he composed the seventeen articles in which the resolutions of the council were summed up (187). In those articles, all evils were ascribed to "Satanical matrimonial unions", and the prohibition of marriage was stated again. Starozheny were expected to live in chastity. It was no use to refer to the New Testament, for it was the duty of all good Christians to interpret the apostolic words not directly and individually, but with the help of the pronouncement and exegesis of the ecumenical councils: "it is a great and disagreeable audacity to obstruct the lips of the Apostles, that a simple laymen should consign to silence the ecumenical interpretation of their words". The new marriages were illegitimate and lecherous, those wives concubines and their children not more than puppies (kobelichishcha) (188). Novozheny were to be excommunicated. Article 3 was extremely hard on parents of novozheny, for heresy and the usage of an antichristian liturgy put the soul under the yoke of Antichrist, lead into a lecherous life of apostasy and full oblivion of God's precepts. It was therefore regarded as a terrible and unforgivable act of impiety to consign one's own offspring in the hands of Antichrist, leave one's children helpless in this time of sorrow. Terrible words were addressed to such irresponsible

186 V. Nil'sky, op.cit., p.15.

187 Ibid., p.11. See also Lyubopytnyi, Istoricheskiy slovar', pp.197-198.

188 Ya.V.Kholin, O novozhenakh postanovlenie bezpopovtsev, pp.23-24.

parents: there would have been no burial for them, the earth would have refused to accept their impure corpses. Yet, if the words were hard, this article also represented a concession of sorts, for parents of novozheny were offered a possibility of expiating their terrible sin by means of an ecclesiastical penance, after which they would not even be required to cease cohabitation with their sinful children (189).

It can be observed that Kholin, while being intransigent on the condemnation of marriage, to which he attributed all evils which stemmed from it, was more reasonable when it came to the consequences of it, namely the offspring of these marriages. In the Polish articles it had been decreed that children of novozheny could be baptized only on condition that they undertook an obligation not to mix with the rest of lay society, observe the orthodox rules of fasting, dress in a proper Christian fashion, do not share food and drinks with their impure parents; at the age of four, they would begin to go to church, and at the age of seven they would be put under the guidance of a spiritual father; besides, people of irreproachable virtue would be assigned to them as godparents. Kholin commented that this article could only be a source of great perplexity to anybody in his right mind. For there should be no children to begin with, and they should not be baptized for having been born outside legitimate marriage. It made no sense according to Kholin to submit children to such elaborate regulations which would remain above

189 Ibid., pp.24-25,37-42. See also Pavel Prussky, Kratkiya izvestiya, pp.52-53.

their level of understanding and only cause confusion in their minds, "this is above human nature", and that rule was an "absurd pronouncement worthy of a muzhik" (190). According to the Polish rules parents could have their children baptized on condition that they kept them apart from the world and themselves, read them Psalms and prayers instead of tales, devilish songs and soul-corrupting books, and did not let them dress according to the "German" fashion. If they did not respect this obligation they were no longer allowed to have their successive offspring baptized. Kholin criticized this resolution for being in a way a sanction of the fact that novozheny were having children, the prohibition notwithstanding; to forbid parents to bring up their children in the same fashion in which they lived was nonsense, for it is well known that children imitate their parents (191). Kholin was equally critical of rules which forbade banquets with heretics and the wearing of "German" clothes. Such banquets, commented Kholin, were inevitable because of kinship ties between Christians and Antichristians: they were not in themselves the evil, but the real evil was "the foul interlacing of the alphabet of their genealogy, which is known to Satan alone". It was folly on the part of the drafters of previous articles to protest against the irregularities which took place at those banquets. For the root of the matter was that a complete separation ought to be observed between Christians and Antichristians, and the only solution to the problem was to eradicate its root, its

190 Kholin, op.cit., pp.25-26,42-47.

191 Ibid., pp.26,47.

cause: marriage (192). It was equally pointless to rave against "German" clothing, because the only effective means to put an end to that fashion would be to eradicate marriages. As Kholin explained, letting us gain a glimpse of everyday Old Believer family life, the problem was that parents worried from the very first infancy of their children on how to find for them a partner in a good, prosperous family. To this end, they imitated "Nikonian" fashions, the manners and costumes of rich, prominent Nikonian houses, and let their children learn ways which were repulsive to God, in order to promote their social advancement. These parents would give up their Russian and Christian clothes, which in society seemed "rough and coarse" and constituted a great obstacle to matchmaking (svatostvo). The power of social conformism was obviously more insidious than outright persecution; Kholin commented that because of marriages and the habits engendered by the need and desire to enter into respectable connections, "thorns infiltrated into the church of God as a consequence of the foul and Satanical marriages" (193). The priestless Old Believers did not, of course, have priests, but they had knizhnye, i.e., people who read and chanted the Holy Books in church. Many of them lived in a debauched and disgraceful way; in the sense that they did not observe fasting, and would eat and get drunk with lay members of the congregation and even with non-baptized persons. Kholin was outraged by

192 Ibid., pp.27-28,51.

193 Ibid., pp.52-53.

their behaviour, but regarded it as futile that only the knizhnye should be reprimanded, as all and sundry were expected to behave in a proper Christian fashion. What made the behaviour of the knizhnye particularly reprehensible was that they, thanks to their reading and singing in the church, could indulge in a lazy and debauched way of life. They were paid for their services, but in fact they were just philanderers (volokity) whose pleasures were financed by the Christian community. It was Kholin's opinion that religious activity should be the result not of being hired, but of one's personal desire and a burning conscience; while, as he observed, the knizhnye were utter ignoramuses, who lived in idleness, without any supervision. It would have been better, argued Kholin, to do like the ancestors who did not have any knizhnye, but gathered together to pray the way they could. All the trouble had begun, suggested Kholin, when places had been founded which were more conducive to perdition than to salvation, an allusion perhaps to the disorders and relaxations which had been a consequence of the foundation of big centres like Preobrazhenskoe in Moscow or the Volkovo cemetery in St.Petersburg.

Kholin believed that the reason why those "built places" were a cause of perdition was that their structures were extremely expensive to keep up and hence it had become necessary to accept offers of help from whoever offered it: even from married people of sinful conduct. Kholin probably also had in mind that, in view of this financial dependence, it was practically impossible for the nastavniki to enforce rules of chastity; married people

paid, hence they could choose the tune. And they were generous to the nastavniki who were supposed to pray for the salvation of their souls and expose by the virtue of their life the sins of the lay congregation. As Kholin commented bitterly, the nastoyateli were leading a style of life not unlike that of "real clergymen" (nastoyashchie tserkovniki), and their only egoistic concern was to celebrate and be paid for as many services and funeral services as possible (194). Kholin was indignant about these "salaried parasites" who satisfied their gluttony in the houses of the rich, and being so honoured by powerful people believed themselves to be worthy of special respect. But, in fact, it would be proper that they should lick the boots of others, especially of other Christians who were not mercenaries of piety and had much more fervour than them. He was most enraged against those ignorant nastavniki whose only preoccupation in life was to be able to continue doing nothing at all, who, not having a proper way of earning a living, had found a way of satisfying their needs, i.e., trading in souls. To "bestialized minds" the very word "nastavnik" was not less sacred than the word "ordination" (khirotoniya): thus all these people who had turned into beasts placed all their hopes of salvation on the nastavniki; they payed them so that any filth and impurity be forgiven them, all which they did against their conscience and against God, the faith and the law, Kholin clearly had in mind the unlawful marriages and the other sins which were a consequence of. He concluded that such nastavniki were most obnoxious to

194 Ibid., pp.58-61.

Christianity, that they were its "cataract", the source of the obtenebration of Christian conscience. And, on top of all, the nastavniki did not lead a virtuous life, i.e., their claim to atone for the sins of the community was by no means substantiated, they too were guilty of breaches of the Canons, they too were deserving of punishment, for their way of life was not sufficiently moral (195).

As the shepherd, so the flock; what emerged was the picture of affluent Theodosians who, instead of reading the Holy Scriptures, went to evening parties which lasted until late at night, played cards for nights on end, not just for the sake of enjoying the game, but for the passion of gambling and showing off their tricks and cunning, their dexterity in defeating others. They were nothing but "robbers", as guilty as those who went to masked-balls, theatres, operas and comedies. But, observed Kholin, this again was but a consequence of marriage, and people who engaged in such activities could mainly be found among the novozheny: again, the root of all evil was to be found in "Satanical marriages" (196). The resolutions of the 1809 council were sent to Moscow for approval, but they were not immediately examined: in that year Kovylin had died, and after a council in 1811 relations between Pomoryans and

195 Ibid., pp.66-73.

196 Ibid., pp.28-30,61-63. Not all St. Petersburg Theodosians accepted these resolutions. Led by a certain Aristov, they defected and found their own group, the so-called "aristovshchina" (Pavel Prussky, Kratkiya Izvestiya, p.51).

Theodosians improved (197). It was not until 1818 that they were examined and nearly all approved.

The St.Petersburg Theodosians found themselves in complete agreement with Moscow. At Preobrazhenskoe there was Sergey Semenovitch Gnusin, a most prolific Theodosian writer. In St. Petersburg equally radical views were propounded by Ivan Tikhonov (1757-1825), Ivan Fedorov Tarovity and Afanasii Akint'ev (1737-1811). Apart from the latter, who is alleged to have been of a more reasonable, less fanatical, disposition, the others are described by Lyubopytny as rabid brakobortsy, prolific in their writings against marriage and on Antichrist, stubborn, quarrelsome and domineering (198). But the triumph of the most extremist Theodosians turned out to be a Pyrrhic victory for all Old Believers, as it contributed to a reversal of the government's policy of toleration.

197 See Poslanie kazanskim khristianam ob Yakove Petrove..., pp.89-97: the Moscow Theodosians object to an equiparation of the Pomoryans to the Uniates, and to the request that they should be rebaptized as heretics. As a protest of the Vyg Pomoryans against Kovylin's slander see Zhalost' domu tvoego, ff.155-164v.

198 Lyubopytny, op.cit., pp.127-130.

Chapter 5

Pavel Onufrevich Lyubopytny (1772-1848)

Lyubopytny means "curious" in Russian, and no nickname could have been more appropriate for this original Old Believer "intelligent" who adopted the language of the Enlightenment and German pietism to defend the institution of marriage. As we have seen in the previous chapter, the debate on marriage was vivacious and widespread among the priestless Old Believers. Lyubopytny was an active participant in this movement, yet the only biographical outline of his life seems biased to portray him as a lonely character, what in Russian would be called a chudak (1). Pavel Onufrevich was born in 1772 in Yur'ev-Pol'skii, in the guberniya of Vladimir, and his mother and father were both Pomoryans. He was an only child and his mother, who soon after his birth became a widow, decided to take him to Moscow and have him apprenticed to a grain merchant. Forced into a trade for which he felt nothing but repulsion, Lyubopytny developed a character which was both stubborn and eccentric. Frictions with his coreligionists were caused by his inability to share their enthusiasm for trade and industry. His boss, an urbanised peasant who had come to Moscow to try his fortune, found it difficult to put up with his clumsiness in the business and must have been most relieved when this gullible, slow apprentice

1 The following is based on N. Popov, 'Kratkii ocherk'. Lyubopytny is also mentioned in I. Egorov, 'Pavel Onufrevich Lyubopytny'; G. Gennady, Spravocnyy slovar', vol II, p.268; BiE. A watercolour portrait of Lyubopytny was exhibited at the Moscow Anthropological Exhibition of 1879, in the section devoted to Old Believer Pomoryan Schools: see A.S. Prugavin, Staroobryadchestvo, p.137.

decided to break his connection with the world of trade, never to resume it again (2).

How he made a living afterwards is not documented. He is said to have mixed with students of Moscow University; as Lyubopytny later recalled, "when still a young man the Moscow circle of scholars, realizing the brilliancy of his talents, always took his views into due consideration, and was engaged with him in fiery, animated discussions "(3). His acquaintance with many a Moscow student has been referred to in order to explain his exceptional good knowledge of literature and grammar (4), though it is also plausible that he received his knowledge in this field from the chapel of the Pomoryans in Moscow, of which, as we have seen, he was an assiduous visitor and a prominent member. The Pomoryan school of rhetoric was in fact famous all over Russia, and Lyubopytny's debt to that tradition is beyond doubt (5).

2 N.Popov, op.cit., p.15. For a similar pattern from an Old Believer merchant background to a life devoted to writing, see G. Zalkind, G.P. Kamenev (1772-1803), p.91.

3 See entry Platon L'vovich Svetozarov (the literary name used by Lyubopytny) in Lyubopytny, Istoricheskiy slovar', p.151; and Druzhinin, nn. 52 and 77 for other autobiographical writings of Lyubopytny.

4 N.Popov, op.cit., p.20. A.I.Aksenov has stressed (Moskovskoe kupechestvo, pp.12-13) that the identification of stable family names is difficult; nevertheless it must be pointed out that in the Spisok vospitannikov okonchivshikh kurs v Moskovskom Kommercheskom Uchilishche za sto let 1804-1904 under the year 1812 there figures Pavel Andreevich Onufr'ev; could that be Lyubopytny's full name? Could it be that his "student friends" came from that institute and not from the university?

5 See N.I. Subbotin, 'Zamechatel'nyy opyt raskol'nicheskoy bibliografii', p.232.

At the time of Lyubopytny's youth the Pomoryans were engaged in fierce debates over the question of marriage; Pavel Onufrevich took an active interest in these discussions and did not let himself be intimidated by the long white beards of the other polemicists of the chapel. In 1780, when he was just eighteen years old, he made his literary debut with a short work on the question of marriage (6). Later in 1799, he wrote another work which enraged the Theodosians and which has come to us through the description left of it by his opponent Gnusin. This is Svyashchennyi teatr (Sacred theatre), a dramatic work with a religious subject as its theme. In it Lyubopytny imagines the Byzantine Emperor Alexis Comnenos in the act of cursing the brakobortsy who exploit his Novella in order to support their superstitious beliefs.

"Ah, the devil has really done a good job with you, mangling you at the bazaar. With this senseless idiocy of yours you have ruined the whole breed, have pestered and plagued all teachers of the Church and all holy systematisers, like the demon of old you convince all the blind of your knavish theory by means of my novella; everywhere without any conscience you drag my Highness (i.e., of Comnenos) and offend my honour by making me look like one of those ignorant and superstitious people. But I deserve better than that, not only from the market's chatterboxes, but also from pious men; because I knew exactly what the substance of marriage is..."

These are the words put by Lyubopytny in Alexis Comnenos's mouth, in order to make him state that he always believed

6 N. Popov, op.cit., p.6.

that marriages can be legitimate even without ordained hands - in Lyubopytny's fictional dialogue the Byzantine Emperor addresses the Theodosians (7). Lyubopytny seems also to have shown little respect for an issue which among Old Believers had always engendered the fiercest passion: church singing. Gnusin calls him a "God hater" (bogonenavistnik) for the contempt he displayed towards "holy and angelical singing" (8). Svyashchennyi teatr, judging from Gnusin's description of it, must have been quite a text to read: Lyubopytny introduced there a portrayal of himself as an angry young man ("v otrochestvom vide") in the act of trampling underfoot an Old Believer elder:

"he pierces the heart of an elder who lays down at his feet, and the wounded old man lifts his right hand holding a scroll which says: "That's what my accursed superstition and shameful zeal have led me, accursed, to"; and below this there is the inscription: "This knave is tormented for his fraud and deceit, because he is the father of ignorance and of nonsense ["Za prelest' i obman/sei muchitsya plutets/chto on nevezhestva i vzdorov est' otets"]" (9).

7 S.S.Gnusin, Predlogi i vozrozheniya, ff. 39v,44. Other works known from Gnusin are: Chistoserdechnoe ispovedanie bezsvyashchennaslovnogo braka of 1799, Kniga o sushchnosti kreshcheniya i braka, Kniga razsmotrenie otvetov podannykh ot khristian, Slovo uveshchaniya o brake, Podrobnaya izvestiya o novozhenakh and Kniga o dvukh putyakh. See S.S. Gnusin, Predlogi i vozrazheniya, ff. 24v,25v,27-v,35,39v and 44.

8 Ibid., f.26v. On Russian liturgical music, a very debated question among the Old Believers, see T. Vladyshevskaya, K voprosu o roli, and M. Brazhnikov, Litsa i fity.

9 S.S. Gnusin, op.cit., f.44v.

Unfortunately this image of Lyubopytny does not seem to have survived, but he can be seen as a preaching beardless young man in the illustration accompanying a work of 1800 (10).

Lyubopytny never married, in spite of the advice of his mother that he should take a wife to help him, and in spite of his own writings in defence of marriage. The reason probably is that he wanted to be a pastor in the Pokrovskaya, and this would not have been possible if, as a married man, he had been forced to remain a layman.

When Pavel Onufrevich was forty in 1812, Napoleon, regarded as Antichrist by some Russians, invaded Russia; among a few other things upset Lyubopytny's life in Moscow. He was among the many who abandoned the blazing city, and for some reason he never returned, at least not permanently. In 1813 he settled in "Petropolis", as he learnedly called the capital, and he began to earn a living as a freight contractor, or rather, he tried to earn a living, for apparently he was hoodwinked by unscrupulous carters and his trade ended up in disaster. Once again Lyubopytny had to give up worldly affairs, and attached himself to one of the St.Petersburg Pomoryan chapels, the one by the Malaya Okhta. This was the best period in Lyubopytny's life; he did not have worry about practical matters, and could devote himself entirely

10 Brachnoe vrachevstvo. See illustration n.l.

to research, to writing and polemicizing in the defence of his ideas. Unfortunately this happy state of affairs did not last long; after some time, Lyubopytny made himself unwelcome because of his difficult temper, and perhaps for more serious disagreements unknown to us, and was eventually driven away. The haven was now closed to him, and he was once again trying to settle down and find a patron who would offer to support him and his literary and polemical pursuits. If not outright generosity, he found shelter at least in an attic provided by a St. Petersburg merchant, a certain Laptev, though the room was very small, too small to contain a table, and besides, Lyubopytny had to look after himself. As for books, he had to depend on the generosity of other Old Believers. His private belongings consisted only of a Bible and an icon. But even Laptev turned out to be only a temporary solution. In 1837 there was a disagreement, and the sixty five year old Lyubopytny was driven away. Thereafter he led a wandering life, moving from house to house, carrying his writings in a satchel (11). In the 1840's one of his writings, Dogmat Khristovoy tservki o klyuchakh (Dogma of the Christian church on the keys), aroused the curiosity of a regrettably unnamed "high ranking Moscow ecclesiastical figure", most likely Metropolitan Filaret, who expressed a desire to meet the author (12). Such curiosity, from such heights, and in such

11 N. Popov, op.cit., pp.23-26.

12 In this work Lyubopytny asserted that laymen too have the power to absolve from sins. See Pavel Prussky, Kratkiye izvestiya, p.63.

times, aroused in its turn great alarm among the Old Believers; Lyubopytny went into hiding and the police were told that he had moved to Astrakhan. And so he must indeed have done, sometime in his life, for otherwise it is not clear why his biographer should refer to him as an "Astrakhanskii meshchanin". This may have been in 1843, because in that year he left St. Petersburg and his last benefactor, D.F. Bolotov, is alleged to have sent to him in Astrakhan the manuscripts which he had left behind in St. Petersburg. The last years of his life were apparently spent between Astrakhan and Saratov. Little is known about this period, except that he died on 17 July 1848, in Kamyshina, guberniya of Saratov, at the age of seventy five; what happened to the manuscripts he had with him is not known (13).

None of his work was ever published in his lifetime. Two of his works, the Istoricheskii slovar' (Historical dictionary) and his Katalog ili biblioteka starovercheskoy tserkvi (Catalogue or library of the Old Believer Church), were published posthumously (14). These two works had been devised by Lyubopytny in 1814, during the happy time he had spent in the Pomoryan chapel of St. Petersburg. There he had plenty of opportunity to consult the many books in the chapel and the private collections of the

13 Ibid., pp.14,22,29. This D.F.Bolotov is mentioned by N. Popov as his main source on the life of Lyubopytny.

14 For the editions of these works, see A.V.Smirnov 'Zamechatel'nye urozhentsy i deyateli Vladimirskey gubernii', pp.1-4. The last edition was published in Saratov in 1914.

merchants who attended its services (15). In these two works Lyubopytny lists only works of Theodosian and Pomoryan Old Believers: the priestly Old Believers authors of the seventeenth century and the Archpriest Avvakum himself are not mentioned at all. Lyubopytny lists the authors in alphabetical order grouping them by the first letter of their name, within each initial letter authors are listed mainly in chronological order; a biography is given, including information about the personality, looks and activity, the sect to which the given author belonged, the dates of his birth and death, or if the author is still alive, his age at the time of composition. All works are listed and briefly described, including those lost as a result of either ignorance or persecution (16).

For the Istoricheskoy slovar' and for the Katalog ili biblioteka Lyubopytny also compiled entries about himself, and chose for the occasion to call himself Platon L'vovich Svetozarov. This was Lyubopytny's opportunity to avenge himself on the "ungrateful throng of the populace, especially of those who were closer to him, and he his talents and his prowess in great contempt, remaining insensitive and unsympathetic to him while he was struggling against the burdens of his life" (17). Obviously, the recognition which, as he tells us, he had found in some Pomoryans of Moscow, St. Petersburg, Riga, Vyg and other such places where he

15 Popov, op.cit., p.23.

16 Nikanor ('Kvoprosu o literaturnom tvorchestve') has accused Lyubopytny of exaggerating the number of works written by Old Believer authors.

17 Lyubopytny, Istoricheskoy slovar', p.152.

was "held in great esteem" was not enough to quench his craving for it. In order to remedy this unsatisfactory state of affairs Lyubopytny himself took care to leave to posterity that description of his merits which he was doubtful others would have provided. He proceeded to describe himself as a "pious, scholarly man of great talent, a fervent and daring writer" who was the first who "explained to the Christian Church the sacrament of marriage, recognising its perfection and eternity beyond the participation of ordained Priests"; Svetozarov, he explained, had been a "distinguished and astonishing creator of many books against the impiety of the brakobortsy (18) and the errors of the Theodosians". Svetozarov's chief merit was the restoration of the liturgical function of the Christian Church; his other merits pertained to the educational sphere, and were exemplified by his organization of Old Believer schools, his achievements in the field of Old Believer history; he was a "guide and enlightener of ignoramuses, and for that he met only with the ingratitude of those stingy scoundrels". But Svetozarov "being a son of the Light", bore no grudges against them, forgave them and prayed God to do the same. For he was aware that "the heavens had made him descend in the present time of darkness so that he would enlighten those people who were turning grey in their ignorance, and thus save the Church" (19) This is a somewhat megalomaniac claim, because as we have seen in the

18 Literally "marriage-breakers"; by analogy with ikonobortsy, the Russian for iconoclasts, it could be rendered as "gamoclasts".

19 Ibid., pp.150-152.

previous chapter there were many Old Believers in his time who wrote with no less daring than Lyubopytny. This is how he wished to be remembered by posterity: "He is of medium height, of handsome body, his hair is of a light chestnut colour, the expression of his long and white face cheerful and pleasant, pervaded by modesty and thoughtfulness. He has a broad and thick beard, adorned with many white streaks and parted at the bottom. One look at him is enough for everyone to realize that here is an important and exceptional man". Such was how Lyubopytny envisaged himself, at the age of fifty six when he was "by severe discipline engaged in preserving the above described shape of his features" (20). What is one to make of this outburst of narcissism? Before we proceed to examine the writings of Lyubopytny and see how and if his claims were justified, I will redress the balance by quoting Andreyan Sergeev (1766- after 1828), a Pomoryan pastor of Moscow. He wrote some satirical verses on this particular weakness of Lyubopytny, and had preceded them by an introduction in which he wrote that "these, and many others which will be explained in the following verses, are the features to be found in him: shamelessness, impertinence, thoughtlessness, riotousness, pride, disloyalty, ambition, stubbornness, inflexibility, highmindedness, disdainfulness, love of glory, indecency, gullibility,

20 Loc.cit. A portrait of Lyubopytny can be seen in N.Popov, op.cit, p.9. B.A. Uspensky pointed out to me that the language used by Lyubopytny to describe the appearance of the Old Believer authors is modelled on the language of the podlinniki, the texts used by the iconpainters as guidelines on how to draw the portraits of saints.

insensitivity, superstition, rashness, despair and prejudices, intellectual poverty, lack of understanding, frenzy" (21). Just a few of these faults, if they were really his, could perhaps explain the frequent upheavals in Lyubopytny's life. He was liable to antagonize people around him, and ^{was} strident in the pursuit of his beliefs.

For Lyubopytny the world was clearly divided between light and dark, knowledge and ignorance, enlightenment and progress on the one hand, fanaticism and superstition on the other; he envisaged himself as the hero, the knight whose mission it was to dispel prejudice and spread true enlightenment by his word and especially by his writings (22). Throughout his career he defended the institution of marriage with such depth of argument and passion that he ended up calling into question nearly all Old Believers assumptions, and introducing a whole series of innovations. I shall first deal with Lyubopytny's conception of marriage and examine then his other views.

Lyubopytny started by thinking along the same lines as Ivan Alekseev, i.e., that in marriage the ceremony and liturgy are of far less relevance vis`à vis what is more profound and indeed substantial; unlike Alekseev, however, he believed in the necessity for the Old Believer church to be able to provide a marriage ceremony

21 Andreyan Sergeev, Koe-cto, pp.218-220. On Sergeev's broadmindedness and recognition that, although at fault in its rituals the dominant church was Orthodox in its theology, see V.B., Moi vospominaniya, pp.50-53.

22 See e.g., Lyubopytny's Simvolicheskiy stateynik, ff. 235-v.

in spite of the lack of an ordained priesthood. Thus his thought reveals a contradictory tension between a total dismissal of ceremonies as empty, decorative and unnecessary adjuncts, and the vehemence with which he tried to force the Old Believers to accept a ritual composed by him, so that they could celebrate the sacrament of marriage. Yet it is a tribute to his seriousness as a thinker that, in order to solve this dilemma, he developed a conception of the church capable of accomodating both its horns. Marriage, according to Lyubopytny, was an institution founded and blessed by God in the garden of Eden, when he exhorted the primeval couple, Adam and Eve, to "be fruitful and replenish the earth". What Lyubopytny had in mind was therefore religious marriage, not a union between man and woman based on purely civil and social foundations. St. Augustine could have subscribed to this view of marriage (23). Lyubopytny did not envisage the sacrament of marriage as exclusively associated with the Christian church, although he believed that the Christian church ought to provide for the sacrament of marriage. He did not offer only one definition of marriage. Sometimes he wrote of its substance as being the "eternal cohabitation" of the spouses; at other times he speaks of an "eternal oath" of the "internal disposition of the soul" or of "mutual inclination of the spouses" (24).

23 See B.A.Pereira, La doctrine du mariage selon Saint Augustin, pp.172-228.

24 Lyubopytny, Pokazatel'stva Khristovoy tserkvi, ff.4v,2lv; Brachnoe vrachevstvo, f.lv.

The blessing of the parents, or the majority of the betrothed were not considered essential, but only a perfection of the institution. Marriage ceremonies were not necessary either, and what is more, could be just a ridiculous adjunct, nothing more than the "loud cry of a priest at the altar" (25). Therefore the presence of a priest was not a matter of necessity, but of pure chance, an arrangement like any other (26), because "every sacrament is realised not by means of external actions, but by the fulfillment of the aim by means of which it achieves perfection as a sacrament" (27). Baptism, for instance, does not take place because of the psalms and anthems but on account of the threefold immersion and the invocation of the Triune God (28). It is not by virtue of the prayers read by the priest, but as a result of repenting with a pure heart that a Christian is truly redeemed by the sacrament of penance. Similarly, marriage as a sacrament finds its substance not in the formality of prayers and solemn ceremonies, but in the reality of the mutual inclination of the spouses and in their cohabitation. So far for the positive definition of the contents of marriage.

25 Lyubopytny, Pokazatel'stva, f.12v, and Brachnoe vrachevstvo (St.Petersburg version), f.42, Pavel Prussky, who edited the text for his Sbornik sochineniy o brake has curiously cancelled this passage: could it be that he found it offensive to the church's dignity? In general, Pavel Prussky's corrections deprive Lyubopytny's text of much of its acuteness and personality.

26 Lyubopytny, Iz knigi dvopolozhnika, f.122.

27 Lyubopytny, Brachnoe vrachevstvo (1800 edition), f.15v.

28 Lyubopytny, op.cit., f.15v. Lyubopytny is here quoting from Petr Alekseev's Tserkovnyy slovar'. On P. Alekseev see Yu. Ya. Kogan, Ocherki, pp.255-258 and passim.

Another distinction is employed by Lyubopytny in order to define clearly the relationship between what is substantial and what is accidental in a sacrament. Taking up a distinction which goes back to scholastic philosophy, and expounding it in an easy, down to earth manner, Lyubopytny writes that

"each substance can remain eternally itself even without the accompaniment of its attributes. For the attribute [prinadlezhnost'] depends on the substance, and not the other way round. Thus, for instance, whether a man be a scholar or not, he nevertheless is a man, and not some other sort of creature. Equally marriage in its substance is nothing else but marriage, while its attributes, being external and therefore accidental objects, may or may not be attached to it, in the same way as science or a garment may or may not belong to a man" (29).

This distinction is instrumental in allowing Lyubopytny to state that marriage does not need to be celebrated by a priest. The Apostle Paul had acknowledged the legitimacy of marriages celebrated before conversion to Christianity, even in Christian times, as Lyubopytny stresses in various historical surveys of how marriages were celebrated both in the West and in Russia (30) where legitimate marriages could

29 Lyubopytny, Otvety Khristovoy tserkvi, f.203. A similar distinction between matter and form of a sacrament can be found in Appologiya o tayne braka, a work highly derivative from Lyubopytny's ideas. On the scholastic origins of the distinction between matter and form in sacraments see Maloney, A History, p.36 and Gorchakov, O Tayne, p.4.

30 See A.Brovkovich, Opisanie, pp.312-315, Pokazatel'stva, ff.15-29v and Brachnoe vrachevstvo, ff.22v-28 for lists of marriages celebrated outside the church.

be celebrated outside the Church. When Russia still had an Orthodox church, it was desirable that God's blessing of the couple should take place through the mediation of a priest (31). But since Christians have remained without a church hierarchy, it is no longer necessary that marriage should be administered by the church, nor need the extinction of the apostolic succession be a substantial impediment to the celebration of legitimate marriages (32). Marriage is in fact a sacrament which, together with baptism and confession, will survive the extinction of the external church and last until the day of Final Judgement. This was a substantial innovation of the priestless theory of the sacraments, according to which, as it had been ruled at the Novgorod council of 1694, only baptism and confession could be administered by a laymen until the end of times.

Lyubopytny raised to three, namely baptism, confession and marriage the number of sacraments which could be administered by laymen. To further this view he wrote a short treatise in which he asserted that all sacraments can be performed in the church as long as four essential conditions are complied with. These four conditions were material, formal, active and final. In baptism, they were water (material), the words pronounced during the immersion (formal), an Orthodox layman to act as minister of the sacrament (active), and the renovation and purification of

31 Lyubopytny, O brake, f.1.

32 Lyubopytny, Otvety Khristovoy tserkvi, ff.203v-204.

man and his adoption by God (final). In penance, they were the repenting Christian (material), his sincere regret and firm intention to mend his ways (formal), an Orthodox Christian as minister of the sacrament (active), and reunion with God (final). In marriage, the matter of the sacrament was the spouses themselves, who take an oath of indissoluble cohabitation and fidelity (formal), the minister is God who gives his blessing to the couple through the offices of an Orthodox layman (active), and the final cause is the increase in the number of the faithful and elected, as well as the preservation of man from the sins of the flesh. These three sacraments are eternal because "the church and the whole of nature... are eternally subject to natural law, and by virtue of the Holy Spirit's grace they cannot depart from it" (33).

While sacraments which are not necessitated by natural law could be done without with the end of the church in 1666, marriage, confession and baptism remain. Baptism cannot be dispensed with because it is the first betrothal with Christ, and the seal of the faith, without which natural man (estestvennyi chelovek) can neither be adopted by God, nor participate in his eternal kingdom (34). Confession of one's sins and repentance thereof are an indispensable means of returning to God's grace. As for marriage, it is the foundation and the soul of the other two sacraments, and is therefore eternal, as the city of God would not be able to

33 See Lyubopytny, Tserkov' Khristova uzakonila, ff.100-107v. Also Filaret Drozdov, the Metropolitan of Moscow, in his catechism wrote that immediate knowledge of God can be acquired through nature: see Pypin, Religioznyia dvizheniya, p.111.

34 Lyubopytny, Tserkov' khristova, f.107v.

fill the ranks of its inhabitants by the exclusive means of conversions from the outside, as the Theodosians argued (35). Ultimately, the justification and foundation of marriage is to be found in the law of nature (36). In other works Lyubopytny added other reasons to explain why marriage was to last for ever, that is, until the end of the world.

There were social reasons for keeping the institution: it was absolutely necessary in order to assess the degrees of kinship, and avoid incest of both a physical and a spiritual kind (37). Lyubopytny was alarmed in this respect by the disorderly lives allegedly led by the Theodosians and all brakobortsy who kept women in secret, had irregular liaisons and did not differ from cattle in their sexual mores (38). Conversely, that relations of kinship would continue until the Last Days was to be inferred from Christ's words, when he spoke of sisters, brothers, parents and such.

There were historical grounds for the legitimisation of marriage: Lyubopytny wrote in 1827 a treatise, Pokazatel'stva khristovoy tserkvi (Demonstrations of the Christian Church), in which he described the different forms of marriage which had existed in various historical periods. From the point of view of substance, argued Lyubopytny, there was only one legitimate marriage, as defined in the previous pages. But in the course of history, its

35 This was seen as the final cause of marriage starting with St. Augustine: see B.A. Pereira, op.cit, p.22.

36 Ibid., f.101.

37 Lyubopytny, Voprosy k tem, koi, f.99.

38 Lyubopytny, Brachnoe vrachevstvo (1800 edition), f.31v.

forms could change; "religious marriages over various centuries were celebrated by the people of God in different fashions, in accordance with the changing circumstances of the world" (39). Marriage by the ceremony of crowning, which as the Theodosians pointed out, had been decreed the only legitimate form of marriage by Emperor Alexis I Comnenos (1081-1118), was in Lyubopytny's view only one of its many possible forms. Lyubopytny actually went as far as criticizing the collection of Russian canon law, the Kormchaya, for turning into a law what Alexis Comnenos had done "for a political reason"(40).

Lyubopytny observed in this treatise of 1827 that before Christ there were numerous different forms of marriage, of which the first is the one exemplified by Adam and Eve, the substance of which was the eternal cohabitation of the spouses (41). The example of Noah's family shows that another substantial aspect of marriage is the internal disposition of the spouses (42). Isaac and Rebecca married by the sole consent of their parents, and so did Jacob and Rachel, Abraham and Sarah (43).

Christ had not hesitated to bless by his presence, and the performance of his first miracle, the wedding of Caḡna which had

39 Lyubopytny, Pokazatel'stva, f.2v.

40 Ibid., f.7. On the rite of crowning (venchanie) see J. Meyendorff, Marriage-an Orthodox perspective, pp.27-32; A.L. Katansky, 'K istorii liturgicheskoy'; and K. Ritzer, Le mariage, pp.170-172.

41 Lyubopytny, Pokazatel'stva, ff.3v-4v.

42 Ibid., f.5v.

43 Ibid., ff.7-10. These couples are among those remembered in the Orthodox ritual of marriage.

been celebrated according to the Hebrew ritual; he did not ask that the ritual be altered, or the marriage recelebrated. The evidence would therefore suggest that God acknowledges the legitimacy of marriages of other faiths. This point had been made at great length by the Apostle Paul (44).

During the history of Christianity marriage had been celebrated in different fashions, not only among Orthodox Christians but also between the latter and heretics (45). Moreover, pointed out Lyubopytny, marriage had met with the approval of the first Old Believer martyrs Avvakum, Lazar, Epifany and Spiridon Potemkin and, as he argued in another treatise, it had finally been acknowledged, after much hesitation, by Andrey Denisov (46).

Lyubopytny pointed out that there were dogmatic reasons why marriage could not be refused without falling into the heresies of the first centuries of Christianity (47). Christians should be all the more on guard against the brakobortsy, because it had been predicted in the Apocalypse that in the Last Days the old heresies would be revived, misleading unaware Christians into the ranks of Antichrist. Lyubopytny believed it to be beyond doubt

44 Ibid., ff.12-v.

45 Ibid., ff.15-29v. See also Brachnoe vrachevsto, 1800 ed., ff.23v-28. Lyubopytny may have borrowed the list of controversial marriages recognized by the Orthodox Church from Feofan Prokopovich's O brakakh pravovernykh lits s inovernymi, ff.11-16. In 1721 Swedish prisoners were allowed to marry Russian women without renouncing their faith: see J.Cracraft, The Church reform, pp.216-217.

46 See chapters 1 and 2 respectively.

47 Lyubopytny, O brake, f.7. and Iz knigi dvopolozhnika, f.129v.

that the brakobortsy were inspired by the Devil and would lead their followers to perdition and eternal damnation by means of their "satanical cunning" (48). It must be said that in his attitude to his opponents Lyubopytny knew no moderation or restraint. He wrote that their theories stemmed from the Devil, together with their prejudices, which hampered the creativity of the Church. They were nothing but "deaf vipers", who while refusing to heed the voice of reason and of God indulged in corrupted mores and lived like animals and cattle. They were secretive and hypocritical, keeping women secretly as they did. Their "literalism" (bukvalism) was leading them to perdition, not to salvation as they claimed (49). He also did not hesitate to dismiss his opponents as stupid and superstitious and their views as nothing but "foolishness" (50). Not surprisingly, the Theodosians in their turn remembered him as a "slanderer" (51). Least appealing of all were Lyubopytny's rejoicings in the misfortunes of his opponents and in the repressive policies of the state when they were directed against them. In 1827, at a time when Old Believers no longer enjoyed much tolerance, he wrote that, if only the Theodosians would recognise the legitimacy of marriage, they would be freed from the "terrible persecutions carried out everywhere against you for your bad

48 Lyubopytny, Pokazatel'stva, f.2.

49 Ibid., ff.2-3. Brachnoe vrachevstvo (St.Petersburg edition), f.62-v. Simvolicheskiĭ stateynik, f.235,256.

50 Simvolicheskiĭ stateynik, ff.266-268v.

51 See Otvet na klevetu Rozhkova i Gavrilu Semenova, f.26.

doctrines and ignorance". In a frame of mind that, perhaps wrongly, is associated with the Dark Ages, Lyubopytny interpreted the persecution of the Old Believers opposed to him as a sign of Divine disfavour (52). Even the Arakcheevshchina was regarded by Lyubopytny as coming to his aid, an evil which God had loosened and let descend on the heretical brakobortsy: "However this divine prophecy has already begun to reveal its manifestations in the form of a supreme ukaz which persecutes them everywhere, and of the misfortune of the military colonies" (53).

Lyubopytny also put forward ecclesiological reasons in favour of marriage: Christ said that the Gates of Hell would not prevail against his Church (Matthew, XVI, 18), hence marriage was to remain, for without the survival of mankind the Church would not be able to last (54). Marriage had in fact been instituted on account of death, so that the ranks of humanity left empty because of death could be replenished by newly-born men (55). Besides, there were two paths of salvation offered by the Church to the faithful: the path of virginity, and that of marriage, both bringing their fruits to God. To claim then that there was only one way to

52 Pokazatel'stva, f.3.

53 Iz knigi dvopolozhnika, f.29; in his edition, Pavel Prussky omitted this passage. Among the Theodosians who were settled in the military colonies was the author of a book recommended by Lyubopytny, Ivan Pavlov Kozlenko, who died there in Elizavetgrad, in 1818. See no.167, *ivi*. On the military colonies, see R.Pipes, 'The Russian Military', and M. Jenkins, Arakcheev, pp.192,197 For a list of Old Believers in military colonies see TsGVIA, fond 405, op.2, no.12154.

54 Lyubopytny, Iz knigi dvopolozhnika, f.31v.

55 *Ibid.*, f.129. Lyubopytny refers to St. Augustine who actually denied that marriage had been instituted because of death. Its only end was the generation of the saints predestined to inhabit the city of God. See B.A. Pereira, *op.cit.*, p.4.

salvation as the Theodosians did, was like sitting on the beast of the Apocalypse (56), because it would be like denying that God is merciful, and would not force on all a burden, that of virginity, which not all Christians are able to bear (57).

That the Church no longer had a priesthood for the celebration of marriage was irrelevant - not only because of the cogency of the need for marriage, but also because of the general conception Lyubopytny had of the church. More than a century of survival without priests had naturally created a background favourable to a different conception of the church. The Denisov brothers were fond of quoting time and again the saying of St. John Chrysostom that "the church is not its walls, but the assembly of the faithful". Among both the Pomoryans and the Theodosians, laymen took a prominent part in the life of the church, administering baptism and confession, and deciding collectively in the sobor, administrative and ecclesiastical matters. On the other hand, although the reason for retaining baptism and confession had been that, according to canon law, these could be administered by laymen, it is also true that the first important community of priestless Old Believers, Vyg, had been built and organized by men who had individually elected to follow a monastic ideal, and emotionally regarded their community as a "small river ... derived from a great source, the Solovki monastery" (58). Thus, the members of the Vyg community and

56 Lyubopytny, Iz knigi dvopolozhnika, f.129v; O brake, f.7.

57 Lyubopytny, Brachnoe vrachevstvo, f.16v.

58 Andrey Denisov, Slovo nadgrobnoe, p.529.

of all other Old Believer communities following that model, came to regard themselves as bound by the precept of chastity typical of monastic life. As for the Old Believers who remained in the towns and the villages, or in the countryside, marriage was not administered to them as canon law did not contemplate its being performed by unordained hands.

Thus, while the sobor of the central community of Vyg lived according to the highest standards of Christian virtue, the other laymen, those who were more exposed to the temptations of the world, could easily fall and sin. They would then beseech forgiveness from their elders (startsy), who in a manner were not unlike those of ordinary monasteries.

As Lyubopytny pointed out, this was not by any means a canonically correct situation, for if it could be argued that marriage could only be celebrated by unordained hands and with the knowledge of a bishop, it could equally be argued that no one could take a vow of chastity, even individual, without permission from a bishop (59).

Curiously, by giving such prominence to elders who followed an ideal of monastic chastity, the priestless Old Believers were perpetuating one of the distinctive characteristics of the Russian Orthodox Church: the predominance in it of the power of the black clergy, with all ecclesiastical authority resting in the hands of the monks, from whose ranks alone the upper echelons

59 Lyubopytny, Otvely Khristovoy tserkvi, ff.167-168 and 183-185.

of the hierarchy could be drawn. Economic power was also concentrated in the hands of the black clergy, with its extensive monastic properties, while the parish priest depended on the good will of the parish for his support (60). This state of affairs had not failed to arouse some protest in the seventeenth century, protest which had, to a large extent, been encouraged by the secular powers, eager to diminish the influence of the church and seize its property but had also found a genuine echo in some of the white clergy (61).

In Alexander's time, pietist conceptions had eroded the prestige of the "external church" and threatened the authority of the Church hierarchy, while, by spreading the Scriptures, the laity were able to gain direct access to the word of God.

In Lyubopytny's conception of the church one can, as it were, sense an echo of this cultural background. He boldly questioned the authority of ordained priests to whom he counterposed a community of "learned and enlightened men", of which he was one of the most prominent. The creative powers of the church were not to be confined to the priests, as those attached to the letter of the canon law, bukvalisty, maintained. The creative spirit had not been extinguished, for it did not reside in the ordained priesthood, khirotoniya, but in the "powerful genius of wise men, predestined from time immemorial" and by means of whom

60 See G.L.Freeze The Russian Levites, pp.164-168.

61 See e.g., V.I. Savva, Sochineniya protiv episkopov XVIII v., and G.L.Freeze, op.cit., pp.46-77.

God mysteriously edifies his church (62). These enlightened men (prosveshchennye muzhy), as Lyubopytny called them in a language reminiscent of Masonic formulas, interpret the word of God, they constitute among themselves the "family of the elected" (sem'ya izbrannykh) who fight against the seven-headed beast. It was of their holy society that Christ said "the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it" (63). They provide the Christian church with the light of thought (svet myshleniya) throughout its centuries; in vain the literalists protest that they have appointed themselves arbitrarily (64).

Reading these words of Lyubopytny one cannot help being struck by the Masonic style of his thought and wish more could be known about possible contacts between him and the Masons (65).

On the extinction of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, when darkness will prevail in religious matters, the church will depend exclusively on unordained men for its survival, who will receive from God full powers in the church. They shall administer the sacraments (i.e., the three surviving sacraments) and receive the keys to heaven (66). Whenever the word of God will lend itself to contradictory interpretations, it will be up to them to pronounce judgement (67)

62 Lyubopytny, Simvolicheskiy stateynik, f.238.

63 Lyubopytny, Iz knigi dvopolozhnika, f.127v, 132, (Matthew, XVI, 18).

64 Lyubopytny, Otvety Khristovoy tserkvi, f.115v; Otvety Khristovoy tserkvi, f.201v.

65 On the knowledge of Masonic books among the Old Believers, see N.F.Sumtsov 'O vliyaniy malorusskoy skhologicheskoy'. On Masonry in Russia, see S.P. Mel'gunov, N.P. Sidorov eds., Masonstvo and T. Bakounine, Repertoire biographique.

66 Lyubopytny, Otvety Khristovoy tserkvi, ff.173v-174.

67 Ibid., f.178.

In spite of occasional statements which might give the impression of parish democratism in his thought (68), Lyubopytny did in fact display a deep distrust of the masses, which he, in the best of the Enlightenment traditions, believed to be enslaved by prejudice and superstition. If left to their own resources, "the crowd of our fools" would be capable of accomplishing the worst absurdities, such as asking the servants of Antichrist to celebrate their marriages, as Ivan Alekseev had suggested, concocting crazy rituals of pagan inspiration, or engage the mercenary services of uniate priests (69). Thus, in order to protect such an unenlightened and unarticulate lot from itself and set it on the right path, Lyubopytny and those of a like mind would take upon themselves the sacred mission of resolving through their writings the uncertainties of the masses, freeing them from the tyranny of superstition (70). But it is also fair to remember that, if Lyubopytny had little but contempt for the superstitious and fanatical masses, his society of enlightened men was not by any means envisaged as a caste as was the clergy of the dominant church (71), but as a meritocracy open to

68 See, e.g., Iz knigi dvopolozhnika, (f.126v), where Lyubopytny says that marriage can take place "v izbrannom krugu Khristovoy pastvy", or in Brachnoe vrachevstvo (St.Petersburg edition, f.61), where Lyubopytny deplores how the masses let themselves be misled by the phantoms of human imagination and of solemn ceremonies.

69 Lyubopytny, Otvet Khristovoy tserkvi, f.122v.

70 Lyubopytny's attitude to the unenlightened masses is beautifully exemplified in Illustration n.2; in the preface to Otvety Khristovoy tserkvi (f.163v: "Lyubov' i zhalost' izbrannykh ubedili menya vospriyat' sey trud resheniya otvetov: i tem prosvetit' i uverit' prostykh i neopytnykh lyudey v predmete shestoy tayny") and in Kratkoe skazanie (f.28: "No sueverie edinozhdy nasazhdennoe v neprosveshchennykh serdtsakh s trudom v nikh unichtozhaetsya").

71 See G.L.Freeze, op.cit., pp.184-222, and by the same author, The Parish Clergy in Nineteenth century Russia, pp.144-155.

whomsoever was capable of mastering the Scriptures. In the Last Days every Orthodox must, in case of perplexity, have recourse to the Holy Scriptures and there solve his doubts. When the Prince of Darkness troubles the Church by various heresies, the only way of salvation rests in the individual reading of the Scriptures. As for those who should not try thus to enlighten themselves, they will perish (72).

It should be stressed here that Lyubopytny's ecclesiastical conception was radically different from that of the other priestless Old Believers. For the latter based their organization on the crucial separation of mir and sobor, on the conception of a monastic community having authority over the laity and atoning for the sins it committed also as an unfortunate result of the absence of the church. It was a world in which the sombre, disquieting presence of sin and the burden of guilt weighed heavily. Lyubopytny instead, by reaffirming the sacrament of marriage and its separate identity and function from confession, did much to emancipate a perplexed laity from the reproachful guardianship of an inflexible monastic group. Lyubopytny pointed out that only a church offering both paths of salvation, virginity and marriage, could be a true church, an institution capable of carrying out its task of salvation. He also did much to enhance the independence and autonomous dignity of the priestless Old Believers' church. He repeatedly stressed

72 Lyubopytny, Brachnoe vrachevstvo (Sobranie sochineniy edition), ff.89v-90.

that the consent of the Tsar and the powers that be is not essential to the legitimacy of marriage (73).

By composing a canon for marriage, he also wanted to oppose the practice which had been encouraged by Ivan Alekseev and which he regarded as detrimental to the dignity of the Old Believers, of celebrating their marriages in alien churches (74). This latter was a practice in which he saw an act of violence towards the Old Believers' religion, an indeed undesirable subordination to the rituals of an enemy church (75).

With an emotional emphasis reminiscent of Rousseau's recrimination against luxury, he inveighed against the gullibility of those who were blinded by the sight of the scintillating, glittering beauty of church ceremonies, and whose imagination prevailed over their intelligence, to the extent of believing marriages celebrated in the Nikonian Church to be legitimate, or take any icon encased in a precious framework of jewels as a holy image (76).

Lyubopytny's conception of the church could in a way be regarded as characteristic of a time when even the originally apocalyptic priestless branch of the Old Believers, at least as represented

73 Lyubopytny, Brachnoe vrachevstvo (St.Petersburg edition), f.57.

74 Lyubopytny, Pokazatel'stva, f.12v; in Brachnoe vrachevstvo Lyubopytny has very hard words for the practice advocated by Ivan Alekseev.

75 Lyubopytny, Brachnoe vrachevstvo, f.61.

76 Ibid., ff.58-61v.

by him and those who more or less shared his views, had definitively adopted the idea that the end of the world was not, definitively after all, imminent. Lyubopytny therefore was well on the way to instituting a society of "enlightened men" who would have made up fully for the absence of a priesthood. He did, indeed, try to strengthen and make permanent an Old Believer church which would have been able to meet its social tasks. Unheard of among Old Believers before, he repeatedly stated that the creativity of the church had not been extinguished.

Lyubopytny believed his conception to be fully in line with the principles of the Pomoryan church; his church seemed to him therefore to have a tradition behind it. In the same way when he composed his Istoricheskiy slovar' and Katalog ili biblioteka he was trying to place his thought within a literary Old Believer tradition. Like most would-be founders of new institutions, he was trying to legitimize his aspirations by projecting them into the past. He needed father-founders of no less authority than the Vyg patriarchs. As the Apostle Paul had rejected the infidel world, wrote Lyubopytny, so "our blessed ancestors, refusing the false doctrines of the Galatians of Petropolis, prophetically defeated them by creating their church". Lyubopytny shows how in this effort of building their church they instituted new dogmas, rules and rituals, such as the dogma of the spiritual kingdom of Antichrist, the dogma of the permanence of the "power of the keys" (i.e., the power of absolving from sins) in the hands of unordained men, and so on. What was crucial, was their realization that a church without a pastor must inevitably end in

dissolution, dissolve itself in the chaos of dissension; and to avoid that, argued Lyubopytny, they had instituted a warden to have authority in every community (77). That is to say, the Vyg fathers appreciated the crucial importance of institutions in enabling their church to achieve some sort of continuity. Yet, it must not be forgotten that Lyubopytny had a rather peculiar conception of the church, as he also speaks of the church as existing before Christ, in a "state of nature" (78). Lyubopytny seems to be wavering between a mystical conception of the church as a spiritual body of the elected of all times, and a more directly institutional and historical conception.

Lyubopytny also speaks of the sacrament of marriage as existing in pre-Christian times, instituted by God the Father. That he, like Ivan Alekseev before him, should stress this is certainly an innovation compared to the resolutions of the Novgorod council of 1694, but is also in keeping with traditional Christian doctrine: the church never claimed marriage as its original institution because marriage was instituted by God the **F**ather in the garden of Eden (79).

In Lyubopytny one can see a desire to strengthen the Old Believer church coupled with a spirit of toleration for other churches and faiths. In this style of toleration, he is not too distant from

77 Lyubopytny, Simvolicheskiy stateynik, ff.5-v.

78 Lyubopytny, Brachnoe vrachevstvo, (Pavel Prussky edition), f.92v: "natural'noe sostoyanie bozhiey tserkvi".

79 Here Lyubopytny, if unusual in the Old Believer position, is in keeping with general Christian doctrine: see G.H.Joyce, Christian marriage, pp.1-16.

the interdenominationalism of the Bible Society, the pietists and the organizers of the Lancasterian schools. Like them, he disliked confessional fanaticism, while at the same time he firmly believed that one should remain in the faith of one's birth; he would probably have understood with no difficulty why Prince A.N.Golitsyn, a pietist and convinced ecumenist, was so infuriated by the conversion of his nephew to Catholicism that he had the Jesuits banished from the capital in 1815, and from Russia in 1820 (80).

Thus, at the same time as he was trying to obtain from the other priestless Old Believers recognition of the legitimacy of the marriage ritual he had created, he was also stating that God acknowledges marriages concluded by people of other faiths in accordance with the prescriptions of their religion (81).

He wrote of ceremonies as being only an external adjunct, but only in order to do away with the obstacles put forward by those who believed only one form of marriage to be legitimate, to the exclusion of all others, and who, by thus excluding the possibility of marriage, led Christians astray from the path of common sense and good mores (82).

But once this point had been made clear, he did not hesitate to produce his own ritual of marriage and try to convince the other Pomoryans of the absolute necessity that their church should have

80 On the episode see W.W.Sawatsky, "Prince Alexander N. Golitsyn," pp.315-321.

81 Lyubopytny, Pokazatel'stva, f.3.

82 Lyubopytny, Brachnoe vrachevstvo (1800 edition), f.30.

a marriage ritual, lest the Christians be forced to flock to other churches to get married (83). He believed that no salvation would be possible outside the church and quoted St. Cyprian to the effect that "nulla salus extra ecclesiae" (84). No virtue, no heroic deed would suffice to achieve salvation if pursued outside the Church, for Christ would then turn away from the souls of those whom he had not adopted. The purpose of the church is to lead to salvation; to make this possible, it provides a legitimate way of satisfying a natural need and gives its sanction to a preexisting institution, ready to forgive and welcome in its maternal fold those who have repented of their erroneous opinions (85). Lyubopytny imagined the church addressing itself to its children thus:

"My beloved children! Be absolutely calm in your soul, that, in the last hour of the Epiphany of God to all mortals, whether you be working in the fields, whether you be husband or wife, with children or without children, whatever you will be, you shall by that be fulfilling God's blessing (Mt., XXIV, 40-41) God in this case will not despise you and you will instantly be lifted by the Holy Angels to heaven, to the Lord of all, to God. For the rest, only have faith, glorify the living God and honour him with your morality. Don't worry, in all probability you will receive the first laurel from God, will receive from him eternal bliss and honour; and you shall then shine like the sun" (86).

83 Lyubopytny, Otvety Khristovoy tserkvi, f.177v.

84 Ibid., f.164.

85 Lyubopytny, O brake, f.1.

86 Brachnoe vrachevstvo (Pavel Prussky edition), f.105v.

Besides social, dogmatic and ecclesiological reasons to justify marriage, Lyubopytny also provides metaphysical ones. This is indeed a rather puzzling aspect of his thought, and the most dangerous one in that it tempts one to leaps of the imagination as to possible influences and connections of Lyubopytny with other currents of thought of the period, though patristic influences absorbed in a creative and original way could suffice to explain some of his ideas.

There are many passages in Lyubopytny that strongly suggest a pantheist philosophy. He writes that marriage is eternal, because nature is eternal, eternal are its laws, as we can constantly witness, and marriage is intertwined in an indissoluble tie with the totality of nature. "For mankind is in the world, it is a microcosm (malyi mir) and is consubstantial to the world" (87). Lyubopytny believes that it is therefore apparent that, because of both the harmonious organization of the structure of the world (soyuz mira) and Revelation, mankind will disappear at the same time as the rest of the world, and not before it".

Elsewhere, Lyubopytny writes that "this world full of marvels will be at its end such as it was in the beginning and, in the beginning, all animated creatures, millions of them, for the miraculous force implanted in them, produced in their wombs, following God's blessing, offspring of their kind. This force is still shining in God's creation and will be active until the end

87 Lyubopytny, Iz knigi dvopolozhnika (Pavel Prussky edition), f.127. Similar ideas were to be found in Raymond Lull, whose thought was known among the Old Believers.

of the world" (88). And, "as the whole of nature shows, if any of the connections of the existing objects were to be abolished, then inevitably the collapse and the dissolution of all the laws of Nature would follow" (89). All the more so if "the king of this world, the being which is above the angels, man, were to be deprived of his nature and of his dominion", and the species of man who is "the cause of everything which is uncommon and marvellous" were to be extinguished, upsetting the order of this world (90). Lyubopytny presented thus a picture of harmony between man and nature, a harmony which it was man's obligation to observe and preserve, lest he should act against the design of the creator. God himself is by Pavel Onufrevich closely associated with nature; God's blessing manifests itself in his creation, the world, as a law of nature eternally active by virtue of its divine author, and reaching by the force of grace the remotest corners of creation, winning its way even in the mineral world (91).

Theology, the science of God, becomes therefore natural theology, sometimes even a science of nature (92). God is found not in the

88 Lyubopytny, Brachnoe vrachevstvo (Pavel Prussky edition), f.91v.

89 Lyubopytny, Brachnoe vrachevstvo (St.Petersburg edition), f.24. The Theodosians were of the opposite view; for them, natural law was tantamount to sin; see Kniga otecheskoe zaveshchanie, chapter 31, ff.249v-260.

90 Lyubopytny, Brachnoe vrachevstvo (Moscow edition), f.5v. and f.12. Cf. Jankovich de Mirjevo, Sokrashchenny Katikhizis, p.11.

91 Lyubopytny, Iz knigi dvopolozhnika, f.71v. and O brake, f.8.

92 Lyubopytny, Otvét Khristovoy tserkvi, f.116v: "Estestvennoe bogoslovie". The distinction between natural and revealed religion dates from the seventeenth century: see E.Eisenstein, The printing presses, p.455, and P.Hazard, La crise de la conscience européenne (1680-1715), p.235. Jankovich de Mirjevo divided his catechism in two parts: "bogopoznanie estestvennoe" and "otkrovennoe" (op.cit. p.1).

laws and dispositions emanating from an all-too-human Church hierarchy, but in nature; in the return to Adam and his harmonious blissful relationship with the surrounding world. This conception, as we shall see in the next chapter, was to be staunchly opposed by Gnusin and all Theodosians, who in the tradition of Christian pessimism believed this to be impossible because original sin had irreversibly tainted nature.

Nature is built on the contrast of opposites, it is a harmony of contending forces. Man participates in it by the opposition of male to female in mankind, writes Lyubopytny echoing St. Augustine. (94). The implication stemming from this conception of marriage is that, since no less an authority than

God made the whole of creation for man and made it a law that man should reproduce himself by his blessing "to be fruitful and multiply" there is no need for the priesthood of the external church in order to celebrate it (94). Nature, like divine grace, clears the seeing powers of man, freeing him from the grip of superstition and enabling him not to be intimidated by the deceitful solemnity of the Church (95). The return to nature does indeed free man to such an extent, that the foundations of the historical and institutional church cannot but oppose a frail resistance to the sweeping force of unleashed natural law, to the Church in its "natural state"; thus, marriage as the sacrament neatly if dryly defined and regulated by canon law is dwarfed

93 Lyubopytny, O brake, f.7v.

94 Lyubopytny, Simvolicheskiy stateynik, f.238.

95 Lyubopytny, Brachnoe vrachevstvo (St.Petersburg edition), f.61; Otvety Khristovoy tserkvi, f.194v.

by the image of the natural union of man and woman submitting to the instigations of natural law, of instincts and feelings implanted in them by God (96).

"We all," writes Lyubopytny, "are the offspring of our ancestor Adam, who was to be eternally in the sole power of the law implanted in him" (97). In other words, Adamitic, prechristian humanity is of no less weight in Lyubopytny's thought than humanity of Christian times. By the act of redemption Christ restored both nature and man, thus returning to Adam the fullness of his natural prerogatives (98). This is not altogether an unfamiliar position for a Christian thinker although there is also another stream of Christian thought, more dualistic, which has remained suspicious of nature and has judged it to have been irreversibly stained by original sin, and delivered beyond redemption into Satan's power. A stance of this kind will be examined in the next chapter.

One of the most striking aspects of Lyubopytny's thought, and the one which he himself regards as setting him apart from most Old Believer polemicists, is his redefinition of what is to be regarded as an authoritative source in the establishment of the truth, and in the definition of the prescriptions of the true religion. There was a general consensus among Old Believers to

96 Lyubopytny, Brachnoe vrachevstvo (Pavel Prussky edition), f.92v.

97 Lyubopytny, Otkrovenie istinno, f.277v.

98 Lyubopytny, Otvety Khrhistovoy tserkvi, f.217v.

refer to rules and texts of the times immediately preceding the ill-fated council of 1666/67. Old Believers had no doubts about the absolute correctness of the Orthodox Church prior to that date. But as the reform had touched upon matters of liturgy, and not of dogma, their attention had sometimes remained focused not on the more general principles of Christianity, but on its exclusively national aspects. It was frequent to refer to the piety of the ancestors as it had been codified in the Hundred Chapters of the 1551 Council, held in what they came to regard as the Golden Age of Russian piety, the time of Ivan the Terrible (99). The resolutions of the Stoglav were not by any means the only literature quoted, but they retained their weight and aura of something defined once and for ever. Besides, each of the Old Believer sects held in great authority the articles of their most important councils; for the priestless Old Believers the foundation stone had been laid at the council of Novgorod in 1694. Equally authoritative and binding were the writings of the most prominent Old Believers: of Feodosy Vasil'ev for the Theodosians, the Denisov brothers for both the Pomoryans and the Theodosians. Lyubopytny, though a Pomoryan, had enough intellectual audacity to enlarge significantly his cultural and religious horizons, bypassing the pronouncements of the great Old Believer authorities and allotting to himself the role of arbiter

99 At the council of the Stoglav all the innovations later sanctioned in 1667 had been condemned, and anathema pronounced on the introduction of any change. This fact was pointed out, e.g., by Andrey Denisov in his Pomorskie otvety. On the Stoglav, see E.Duchesne, Le Stoglav and I.N.Zhdanov, Materialy.

according to criteria which, until then (and after him as far as the majority of Old Believers were concerned), had played no part. Against those whom he dismissed as "literalists" Lyubopytny stressed the necessity of ordering in clear precedence of authority the various sources of judgement - of categorizing them, as it were. Such an act of discrimination was believed by Lyubopytny to be essential to avoid letting the small, marginal detail, the "particularia" as it were (malaya veshch') upset the general order of the "universalia" and bring about the dissolution of the whole system. Here is a passage from Brachnoe vrachevstvo:

"And thus every wise man who knows the spirit of the Christian Church must consider how impious is such a presupposition which leads us astray from the way of the holy truths and good customs; under the pretext of respect of the law we throw ourselves in the abyss of illegality and foul vices. Preoccupied with a small detail, those madmen arrive at the point of destroying the laws of nature, of disrupting human rights, and thus bring to perdition weak and uncultivated souls. If one observes the law of revelation and nature, then he can also take into some account a small detail. But if confused by such a small particular, he will disrupt the law and humiliate it, then what use and what pleasure will come to him for all the terrible rubbish pronounced in the name of that small particular? It will be very stupid indeed"(100).

Lyubopytny thus believed that there was a universal order observable in Revelation and Nature. Gnosiologically, this meant a twofold order of sources complementing each other.

Revealed truth can first and foremost be known by means of the Holy Scriptures, complemented by the writings of the Holy

100 Lyubopytny, Brachnoe vrachevstvo (St.Petersburg edition), f.60.

Fathers, and the resolutions of the Councils, as it can be seen from the style of Lyubopytny's quotations.

In succinct form, Revelation is condensed in the Symbol of Faith, or Credo, which can also function as a criterion for the constitution of new dispositions and rituals (101). The authority of individual ecclesiastical writers must be checked against the Holy Scriptures.

Man can know nature by means of his senses. Sensibility is a gnosiological apparatus by which God has endowed man at the moment of creation, and which is to remain unaltered until the day of the final judgement:

"the whole of nature, and all its laws, as every hour confirm to us our feelings, are solemnly in their primeval condition, and will remain in such a state, without any alteration, until the Archangel's trumpet; within this complex will remain of necessity also the Christian marriage" (102)

The senses bear witness of the uninterrupted pulsation in our being of the laws of nature, which uninterruptedly aim at being fulfilled, and "fight against each other, lift or lower themselves in the guise of thermometers at the changes of the weather" (103). Other times, Lyubopytny borrows scientific concepts in a rather crude fashion; once, for instance, he stated that food ought not to be shared with Nikonians, because

101 Lyubopytny, Simvolicheskiy stateynik, f.241.

102 Lyubopytny, Iz knigi dvopolozhnika (Pavel Prussky edition), f.127. A similar concept in the Pomoryan Vasily Sudnev's Six answers, f.155v

103 Lyubopytny, Otvety Khristovoy tserkvi, f.211v.

otherwise poisonous atomic particles contaminate and punish the transgressors (104).

Reason and conscience also help man in the understanding of nature. Natural law can be of normative value because it coincides with God's blessing and prescriptions and in this sense one can speak of natural religion; man can feel the pangs of his conscience whenever he goes against nature. Conversely, only a conscience debilitated by either sin or ignorance is unable to rebel against violations of nature; that is to say, conscience functions as a negative parameter. More positive are the indications provided by reason, God's supreme gift to man (105).

Reason enables man to distinguish between substance and attributes and to establish the right connections between them, by which what is of major or minor relevance to a subject can be correctly assessed. By enabling man to understand the purpose of Creation, reason also points out to him his obligation to preserve his life (106).

Morality cannot exist apart from the Holy Scriptures and reason; in the Last Days when mankind is bereft of the leadership of the visible church the Orthodox Christians in cases of doubt must

104 Lyubopytny, Otvét o nesoobshcheníem, f.5v. Lyubopytny may have borrowed scientific concepts from William Derham's Physico-Theology, or a Demonstration of the being and attributes of God from his works of Creation, London, 1713, which was translated in Russian in Lopukhin's printing press as Estestvennaya bogosloviya in 1784 (S.K.1769), and which he quotes, e.g., in Otvét Khristovoy tserkvi, f.116v.

105 Lyubopytny, Brachnoe vrachevstvo (St.Petersburg edition), ff.29v.

106 Lyubopytny, Brachnoe vrachevstvo (Pavel Prussky edition), f.117; Otvety Khristovoy tserkvi, f.203.

consult the word of God, and read and interpret it in the light of the spirit of the Christian Church (107).

Every Christian, in the chaos of uncertainty of the Last Days, when heresy will proliferate, has a duty to enlighten himself with the means available to all: revelation and reason, placing his trust in nature in consideration of the correspondence between macrocosm and microcosm and finding in the Holy Scriptures shelter from the Devil (108).

Against God and nature together the novella on marriage of Alexis Comnenos can have binding force only for "blind fools", who believe the foundation of the truths to lie in the passion of mortals (109). Lyubopytny thus brushes aside the Byzantine legislation and Russian canon law as being irrelevant to the question. Opposing church laws notwithstanding, man must heed God's will alone; "God's will has established marriage from time immemorial ... why not submit to it? To what purpose oppress our noble conscience, and murmur against Heaven and the whole of his Holiness?" (110). Alexis Comnenos, with his novella which sets limits to the law of nature cannot bind the whole of humanity, but only the ignorant and superstitious; "What can serve to us as a means to Salvation, human law or natural law? (111).

107 Lyubopytny, Otvety Khristovoy tserkvi, ff.163v, 173v.

108 Lyubopytny, Brachnoe vrachevstvo (Pavel Prussky edition), f.90; Iz knigi dvopolozhnika (same edition) f.127.

109 Lyubopytny, Brachnoe vrachevstvo (St.Petersburg edition), f.58v.

110 Lyubopytny, Otvety Khristovoy tserkvi, f.172v.

111 Lyubopytny, Voprosy k tem, koy, f.98v.

Only ignorance and a mind enslaved by prejudice can believe in dogmas which are not founded in the Holy Scriptures, such as: that in the Last Days the pastors of the church have no full power because they are not ordained; that in the time of Antichrist Christians can take vows of chastity without the blessing of a bishop; that in the time of Antichrist extreme unction is no longer necessary and that there can no longer be marriages (112). When the scriptures are silent only reason can serve as a criterion (113). Experience and the observation of things as they really are carry more weight than formal definitions, wrote Lyubopytny against the Theodosians who continued to call virgin (devitsa) a woman who had known men, only because she had not been formally married in a church. Reality as perceived by the senses is more relevant than dead letters.

There is another aspect of Lyubopytny's thought which, if not directly relevant to the question of marriage, is nevertheless of importance in assessing his place in the history of Old Believer thought: his views concerning education and, closely connected with them, his belief in progress.

Lyubopytny regarded education as a means of perfecting the most precious of God's gifts to man, reason. Besides, in the Last Days when the visible church had collapsed, and the priesthood

112 Lyubopytny, Otkrovenie istinno. In this short work Lyubopytny manifests his intention to recreate a church, complete of all functions and sacraments in spite of the rule of Antichrist.

113 Lyubopytny, Otvét Khristovoy tserkvi, f.115v.

disappeared, the leadership and guidance of the faithful was bound to pass into the hands of enlightened laymen. This was very much in keeping with priestless tradition of communities headed by lay wardens, but new was the emphasis on the faith in education as a panacea against human weakness and a means of liberation of man, of emancipation of the soul for the contemplation of God's eternal truths. Education was, first and foremost, the weapon against Lyubopytny's arch-fiends, superstition and fanaticism, those monsters conjured up by the sleep of reason which Pavel Onufrevich the enlightener was to dispel, freeing simple and uncultivated minds from their terrible tyranny, from the yoke of dead letters, and from the mystifying pretenses of the Church in power.

Education dispels prejudice and, "if in our society there were education of all, then it would not be enslaved to repellent superstition, would not speculate crazily, and superstitiously enforce such an evil that marriage can be legitimate only according to the legislation of Alexis Comnenos" (114).

Education would also give dignity to the otherwise ignorant and to those intimidated by social and economic inequalities. Expressing his indignation against the Theodosians among whom rich and influential merchants could evade the prohibition of marriage, he wrote: "from their opinions it comes out that he who is sumptuously dressed and rich is a human being, while he who is

114 Lyubopytny, Pokazatel'stva, f.2.

thin and poor, that one is not deemed worthy of humanity - vade retro, ignorance and base superstition!" (115). Whereas an enlightened mind is not blinded by intimidating appearances, which strike fear into the imagination of children, nor is it misled into undue respect by a costly displaying of private piety (116). Wise men can have but a tolerant condescension towards superstitious rituals, harmless but unnecessary, such as the purificatory prayers for women after childbirth, and their attention is ever on guard to denounce the absurdities and harmful contradictions generated by underdeveloped reason, absurdities such as allowing married people to live together but not to have intercourse with each other, or to marry in Nikonian churches as had been advocated by Ivan Alekseev (117).

In order to correct these evils, Lyubopytny drew up in 1830 a project for an Old Believers' school entitled Kratkoe

115 Lyubopytny, Brachnoe vrachevstvo (1800 Moscow edition), f.2.: "kto pyshno odet, ili kto bogat, tot est' chelovek. A kto khudoy i beden, tot nest' dostoin chelovechestva. Podi proch' nevezhestvo i podle sueverie". In the St. Petersburg edition, f.24v.: "kto vlastelin mira, ili kto bogato odet, tot edinstvenno dostoin chelovechestva. A kto is smertnykh lishen sikh kachestv, tot voistinnu ne est' chelovek. Podi proch' s sim tolkom gnusnoe nevezhestvo, i nechestivoe izuverstvo". This last passage has been eliminated in the Pavel Prussky edition. I have quoted them both here to show how twenty seven years later, Lyubopytny's style has become more pretentious and prolix, also more abstract. Gavriil Ilarionovich Skachkov was likewise indignant at the rich priestless Old Believers, who formally condemned marriage, but made secret agreements on dowries. See A. Vasilevsky, 'Istoriya pokrovskoy', p.265.

116 Lyubopytny, Otveti Khristovoy tserkvi, f.195.

117 Lyubopytny, Simvolicheskiy stateynik, f.245, 249, 254.

nastavlenie (118). Lyubopytny was thus making his own contribution to popular education in a period of great pedagogical ferment; in 1818 the first Lancasterian School had been founded in St.Petersburg, and many more were to follow (119).

In the preface he deplored the fact that the Pomoryan church had never had "classical rules in the edifying education of faith and reason". This claim of Lyubopytny's is not actually justified, if only one recalls the flourishing school of rhetoric of Vyg. But maybe Lyubopytny only meant to say that education was not good enough. He greatly admired Ivan Alekseev, yet he was enraged and infuriated by what to him seemed Alekseev's incapacity to draw the last conclusions from his premises. In his Preface one can feel distinctly how much Lyubopytny owes to Alekseev's inspiration, whose writings he quotes (120). Lyubopytny blames ignorance and lack of a proper, systematic education for the failure of even such a clear mind as Alekseev's to strengthen the Pomoryan church, defend it from its enemies and provide it with all the liturgies, sacraments and rituals it

118 V.Popov (Kratkiy ocherk, p.9) writes that it was actually written in 1840, but Lyubopytny for unexplained reasons, preferred to date it 1830. The project had been composed on request of a St.Petersburg merchant. It is not known whether Lyubopytny's project ever materialized, but it appears that his contribution to the development of Old Believer education was acknowledged; in 1879 his portrait was on show at an anthropological exhibition in Moscow, in the section devoted to Pomoryan schools; see A.S. Prugavin, Starobryadchestvo, p.137.
119 See A.N.Pypin, Obshchestvennye dvizheniya v Rossii pri Aleksandre I, pp.352-358 and B.Hollingsworth 'Lancasterian schools'.

120 Lyubopytny, Kratkoe nastavlenie, p.207.

needed in order to be fully effective. The reason for such a failure, Lyubopytny believed, was that Alekseev and other Old Believers of talent had been forced by circumstances to educate themselves as best they could, "either with some of the Muses and some narrations, or with other types of enlightenment" (121). Lyubopytny does not even stop to consider whether Ivan Alekseev ought to have wished to strengthen the Pomoryans against the Theodosians and all other churches, nor indeed whether he may have had a reason for stopping where he did; but then, to criticize Lyubopytny is also to criticize a whole mental attitude for which the historiography of the Enlightenment has been frequently attacked. In fact it is surprising to realize to what extent Lyubopytny has absorbed the arrogance and enthusiasm with the powers of reason usually associated with the Enlightenment; he is deeply convinced that, if only properly enlightened by the "lamp of philosophy", all other Pomoryans would of necessity have agreed with his views. Lyubopytny blames ignorance for the dissensions among the Old Believers, all the "futile commotions and theories of perdition of our church" and is inflamed by the hope that by writing his Kratkoe nastavlenie and creating a school according to this plan, he will accomplish the most useful deed of dispelling prejudice and enlightening his coreligionists (122). In Lyubopytny's plan after basic education in the three

121 Loc.cit.

122 Ibid., p.208.

R's every "reasonable man" would have progressed to the study of "all belles-lettres" up to theology. The programme of studies devised by Lyubopytny was to be divided into seven classes. The first class was to be devoted to a brief history of the church and of its catechism. The second class would be devoted to the study of dogmatic books written by Old Believers against the enemies of Orthodoxy. Among the latter Lyubopytny identified not only the Nikonians, but also the "stubborn Old Ritualists" and the errors of some Old Believer churches. These first two classes were intended to provide the student with the first elements of knowledge (123). The books recommended by Lyubopytny for the first two classes were Andrey Denisov's Pomorskie otvety, the Shchit very (124) a Dukhovnyi mech' (125), the book Titin (126), the refutations written by Semen Denisov and Daniil Matveevich against the Nikonian books Skrizhal', Zhezl and Uvet

123 Ibid., pp.208-210.

124 There are two works by this title to my knowledge: A Shchit very was composed in 1789-90 by Timofey Andreev (1745-1803), a Vyg Pomoryan, initially a brakoborets, who then gained Lyubopytny's approval after changing his view on the subject - see N.I. Kostomarov, Istoriya raskola, p.520 and Lyubopytny's Istoricheskiy slovar'. This Shchit very is Druzhinin n.856. Another Shchit very is the one composed in 1699 by the monk Avramy (Druzhinin n.1.) See N.Yu.Bubnov 'Knigotvorchestvo', p.33.

125 A Mech dukhovnyi had been published in Kiev in 1666. Its author was the bishop of Chernigov, Lazar Baranovich. See Titov, Predlozhenie k pervomu tomu, pp.402-423. Barskov, (Pamyatniki pervykh let, pp.112-113), writes that Nikon protested against this book which was full of Latin and Roman mistakes.

126 Titin is a work by Ivan Alekseev on the Last Days and on Antichrist (Druzhinin, n.22).

(127); Semen Denisov's Yasnoe i trogatel'noe pokazanie o iskanii obraza Khristovoy tserkvi vo svyatom kreshchenii, i o nechestivoy forme Nikona Patriarkha kreshcheniya (128) a book by Ivan Vasil'evich, Chuguevskii monakh, Protivopolozhnik svyashchennykh obryad Kristovoy tserkvi protiv Nikona Patriarkha (129); various works by Timofey Andreev of Vyg (130); two works by a Daniil, Moskovskii monakh (131); the Diakonovye otvety composed against Pitirim

127 The books referred to by Lyubopytny are the Skrizhal', an exegesis of the liturgy serving the purpose of justifying Nikon's innovations, translated in Russian by Arseny Grek and Epifany Slavinetsky and printed in 1656, the Zhezl pravleniya of Simeon Polotsky, printed in Moscow in 1666 (see A.S.Demin, 'Zezl' pravleniya'); the Uvet dukhovnyi of Afanasy Lyubimov bishop of Kholmogor, printed in Moscow after the 1682 rebellion of the streltsy. An Oblichenie v knigu Zhezl pravleniya by Semen Denisov is listed by Druzhinin, n.41. Daniil Matveev (1687-1776) wrote a Pokazatel'noe spisanie na knigi Skrizhali, Zhezla i Uveta.

128 Druzhinin n.1. The actual title is a more modest Iz-yavlenie: this is a good example of Lyubopytny's way of quoting titles, including in them his own comments.

129 By this Lyubopytny probably means the Pokazanie v dvukh stolbtsakh raznosti drevney i novoy tserkvi (Druzhinin n.2). Ivan Vasil'ev (1744-1811) was a Pomoryan highly esteemed for his rhetorical skills. See Lyubopytny, Istoricheskii Slovar', pp.118-121.

130 On Timofey Andreev, see n.124. Lyubopytny recommends three books: a Stoglav against Nikonian baptism (probably Druzhinin n.20) and a book against Dmitry Rostovsky on beardshaving (probably Druzhinin n.18). Dmitry Rostovsky wrote Razsuzhdenie o obraze Bozhii i podobii v cheloveke, i o bradobritii (Moscow, 1714), in which he followed St. Augustine arguing that the image of God in man was not a bodily, but a spiritual one: the soul is image of God because it has three powers: memory (Father), reason (Son), and will (Holy Ghost). Hence the beard cannot be considered the image of God in man, therefore women too were created in the image of God.

131 Probably Daniil Bitugovskiy of the Moscow Preobrazhenskoe Theodosian community who wrote an Apologiya o vechnom bytii v Khristovoy tserkvi monashestva, (Druzhinin n.4). The works recommended by Lyubopytny are a Poema o ne vozvratnom padenii v blagochestii Rossiyskoy tserkvi and a Stoglav (perhaps Druzhinin n.1. or 2).

(132); a confutation by Andrey Denisov of the Bishop of Ryazan' Stefan (133), the Otvely composed by the Moscow merchant Fedor Monin against the Nikonians (134) and seven works by Lyubopytny himself (135). In addition to these works, Lyubopytny recommended as extra reading the following "moving ecclesiastical histories": a Streletskaya pis'mennaya istoriya (136); the Solovetskaya chelobitnaya (137), Semen Denisov's Istoriya ob otsakh i stradal'tsakh solovetskikh and Vinograd rossiyskii; Ivan Alekseev's Istoriya o begstvuyushchem svyashchenstve (138), Lyubopytny's own Yadro starovercheskoy tserkvi; and the Sostav vsekh zakonov i gosudarstvennykh ukazov ot novogo perioda Rossiyskoy very which is full of examples of "tyranny [tiranstvo]" against the pious Old Believers (139). Lyubopytny had devised his plan in terms of gradual ascent of the

132 The Diakonovye otvely, although composed by Andrey Denisov are so called because they were read in Nizhnii-Novgorod by the Deacon Alexander to the Orthodox missionary Pitirim in 1719. See R.O. Crummey, The Old Believers, pp.79-85.

133 Druzhinin, n.8.

134 On Fedor Monin, see chapter 4. This work of his is mentioned in connection with another by Gavriil Ilarionovich Skachkov. (Druzhinin, n.30).

135 Lyubopytny quotes three works mentioning their subject: one on the right of unordained men to administer baptism, one on the extinction of priesthood, and one on the cross. The other four are quoted more intelligibly and can be identified as 1. Dogmat Khristovoy tserkvi o klyuchakh; 2. Otvet Khristovoy tserkvi; 3. Iz knigy dvopolozhnika; 4. Pokazatel'stva Khristovoy tserkvi.

136 Probably Savva Romanov's Istoriya o vere i chelobitnaya o strel'tsakh (Druzhinin, pp.242-243) - see A. Brovkovich, Opisanie, p.54 and N.Yu. Bubnov, op.cit., pp.27,35.

137 See chapter 2.

138 See chapter 2 and 3.

139 Lyubopytny is probably referring to the Polnoe Sobranie Zakonov Rossiyskoy Imperii, published in St.Petersburg in 1830.

intellect, of, as he called it, "elegant graduality [izyashchnaya postepennost']" (140) After the first two classes, more complex ones followed. The third class was to be devoted to the study of books of canon law, such as the Kormchaya, the Nomokanon (141); the book of Nikon of Montenegro (142); the book of Sevast Armenopulos (143); the canonical book of the Patriarch Photius of Constantinople (144); Matvey Pravil'nik ieromonakh

140 Lyubopytny (Kratkoe nastavlenie, p.208) speaks of ascents and descents of the intellect, which ascends siyaya and descends pomrachayas'. The intellect ascends from the lower grades, and reaches gradually the higher levels of knowledge, from grammar to theology. This was a theme typical of Raymond Lull, which he derived from Neoplatonism.

141 These two were the most important books of Russian canon law. See I. Žužek, Kormchaya kniga.

142 The Kniga prepodobnogo otca nashego Nikona, Igumena Chernyya Gory united in one volume the Pandekty and the Taktikon; it was sometimes called Sinaksar. An edition was printed by the Old Believers in their printing press of Pochaev in 1795. See also Sopikov, n.594, and Budovnits, Slovar', p.338. Extracts from the book of Nikon from Montenegro were printed in chapters 71-70 of the Kormchaya. See I. Žužek, op.cit., pp.99-100 for bibliography.

143 Konstantin (and not Sevast) Harmenopulos lived in the middle of the fourteenth century and was supreme judge in Thessalonika. Among the Greeks the word 'Harmenopulous' became a popular synonym for Greek-Byzantine law, and 'Jus Graeco-Romanum'. See entry 'Bessarabskie mestnye zakony', BiE, vol.3, pp.610-611.

144 On the so-called Nomokanon of patriarch Photius of 883, which was excluded from the Russian Synodal Kormchaya, see I. Žužek Kormčaja kniga, pp.25-26, 37-38, 42-43 and 234. Parts of it were translated in Slavonic by Maksim Grek, who in 1513 brought to Russia Photius' Nomokanon together with the commentary on it of Balsamon. Vassian Patrikiev, the former prince and monk who was opposed to monastic property, inserted Maksim Grek's translations in the Kormchaya he completed in 1518.

(145) the canonical book of Ioan Postnik (146) and the book of John Chrysostom (147). The fourth, fifth and sixth class were to be dedicated to the study of, respectively, dogmatic and polemical literature, a study in depth of how certain erroneous opinions had taken root among the Old Believers, and an examination of the erroneous views of the priestly Old Believers. Because some of the books prescribed for these studies are common to more than one class, I will deal with them collectively. They were: Andrey and Semen Denisov's "Epistles on peace in the church to the Theodosians" (148), a series of works by Daniil Matveevich of Vyg (1687-1776) (149), a warning by German Saratovskii monakh to the Theodosians about the danger of falling into the galileyskaya eres', by which he meant

145 By this Lyubopytny intends the Syntagma of the Byzantine canonist of the fourteenth century Matvey Vlastares. In the seventeenth century his Syntagma was translated in Russia by Epifany Slavinetsky. The Greek and Russian text have been published by M.Gorchakov in K istorii epitimnykh nomokanonov. See also I.Žužek, op.cit., pp.140.

146 On the Pokayannyi ustav of Ioann Postnik or John the Faster see I.Žužek, op.cit., p.138 and S.I.Smirnov, Drevne- russkii dukhovnik, appendix, pp.273-277.

147 Lyubopytny might have in mind the Sluzhebnik ili Bozhestvennaya liturgia sv. Vasil'ya Velikago Ioanna Zlatoustavo i prezhdesvyashchennykh, Kiev, 1762- (Sopikov n.13195). This is not a canonical book but it contained, after the text of the liturgies, some questions and answers on liturgical matters. See I.Žužek, op.cit., p.177.

148 See chapter 2

149 Lyubopytny recommends a book on the prayer for the authorities (Druzhinin nn.12 or 14), 21 answers to I.A. Kovylin, the head of Preobrazhenskoe (Druzhinin n.3) and other 19 confutations to Kovylin (Druzhinin n.16).

the Galatians to whom St. Paul addressed the omonymous epistle (150), many works of Ivan Alekseev (151), a book by Ivan Fedorov Ersh on the resurrection of the old heresies by the Theodosians (152); two books by Gavriil Ilarionovich Skachkov (153), Andreyan Sergeev's Pukovodstvo k tserkovnomu miru pomorskoy tserkvi s feodoseevoy (154); two books by Grigory Ivanov (155) a book by Andrey Borisovich of Vyg on the eternity of marriage (156) two books by Timofey Andreev (157) a book by the Theodosian Nikita

150 See Druzhinin, p.83. Lyubopytny recommends a Poslanie addressed by German of Saratov (1710-1778) to the Theodosian Il'ya Ivanovich (?-1771) defending the Pomoryan practice of praying for the authorities.

151 Lyubopytny recommends the Istoriya o begstvuyushchem svyashchenstve; the Slovo vozglasitel'noe na devstvennyi sobor; 27 articles on the erroneous doctrines of the Theodosians (Druzhinin 27); a Oblichenie in thirty seven articles against the Theodosians and other writings against the popovtsy.

152 Ivan Fedorovich Ersh (1695-1755) wrote two such works (Druzhinin nn.1,5) and another one in which he argued that the Theodosians, being heretics, should be subjected to rebaptism if they wanted to be accepted by the Pomoryans.

153 Lyubopytny recommends O tserkovnom mire of 1814 and O mneniyakh Feodosievtsev Preobrazhenskogo kladbishcha of 1818.

154 This book is not listed in Druzhinin. Lyubopytny also mentions it in Khronologicheskoe yadro (See N.I.Kostomarov, Istoriya raskola, p.252).

155 Grigory, Ivanovich Romanovsky (1748-1796), a Moscow Pomoryan, mainly wrote against marriage, but here Lyubopytny recommends two works of his' against the Theodosians in favour of prayers for the authorities (Druzhinin, nn.2,3).

156 Druzhinin nn.12 or 19. Andrey Borisovich (1734-1791) was nastoyatel' at Vyg.

157 Shchit very (see n.124 here) and O nachale razdora Feodosievykh s vygoretskim obshchezhitel'stvom, printed in N. Popov, Materialy, pp.21-34.

Markov addressed to the priestly Old Believers (158), a book by another Theodosian, Yakov Vasil'evich Kholin (159) an history of the Theodosian church by Ivan Pavlov Kozlenko (160) two books by Grigory Ivanov against the priestly Old Believers (161) and, also against the priestly Old Believers, Pazgovor Tarasiya s Trifiliem by Ivan Vasil'ev, Chuguevskii monakh (162); Lyubopytny also recommended the rules of the various Old Believers councils, some of which he regarded as useful examples of stupidity and fanaticism and, needless to say, numerous works by himself, fifteen in all.

The books quoted so far show eloquently that the completion of an Old Believer education was quite a laborious enterprise; the seventh class was designed to be the perfection of all knowledge hitherto acquired. Students would devote themselves to the attentive reading of "engaging and sacred books". Only at this stage Lyubopytny recommends the study of the whole Holy Scriptures, to be accompanied by books of exegesis of the

158 Nikita Markov (1742-1805) was a Theodosian pastor of Vyshnyi-Volotsk (see Otvet khristovoy tserkvi in Appologiya, f.119v). He was a successful missionary and in Tikhvin he made 300 new converts to the old faith (See N.I.Kostomarov, Istoriya raskola p.259). He devoted his efforts to an appeasement among Pomoryans and Theodosians. On the work recommended by Lyubopytny see A. Brovovich, Opisanie, p.328.

159 See chapter 4. Lyubopytny here recommends a Zamechaniya o raznykh mudrovaniyakh ego predkov.

160 Ivan Pavlov Kozlenko (1752-1818) was a Moscow Theodosian, highly valued by the leader of Preobrazhenskoe, Kovylin. Lyubopytny recommends his Kratkoe povestvovanie deyanykh Feodosievskoy tserkvi (see also n.53. above).

161 Druzhinin, nn.21-22. On Grigory Ivanov Romanovsky, see n.155 here.

162 See chapter 4.

Old Testament and of the New Testament (163). He also recommends "all the histories of the church", including those written by the Metropolitans of Moscow, Platon Levshin and Filaret Drozdov (164).

Lyubopytny concluded his plan of education promising that those who would follow it would be distinguished by

"the glory of the heavens, the thundering applause of the centuries, and genius in the assembly of enlightened men, who will confirm that he is indeed a pillar and support of the Christian Church, a hero and a patron for the chosen ones, a holy philosopher, victorious over the world and the terror of mournful hell"(165)

163 The complete Bible had first been translated in Russia in 1499; this was a manuscript version in Old Church Slavonic. The first Bible in Old Church Slavonic was printed in Moscow in 1663. In 1751 this edition was reprinted with corrections and an introduction. The first Bible in Russian was printed in Vienna in 1803 - see Sopikov, n.2229. In 1816 the Bible Society printed a stereotyped edition of the second edition of the 1751 Bible, and in 1818 the Gospels were printed in Russian. The first full Bible in Russian was printed only in 1876. See Rizhsky, Istoriya perevodov. Bible texts were best known in Russia through lectionaries such as the Apostol. The Old Believers bought a great number of copies of the 1816 Bible, but the success was partly due to a comic misunderstanding; the Old Believers had thought "stereotipnoe" to stand for "starotipnoe" i.e., according to the Old Books: see E. Henderson, Biblical Researches, p.27. The New Testament translated into Russian had great success among the Old Believers (Pypin, op.cit., pp.104, 245). The exegesis recommended by Lyubopytny are those of St. John Chrysostom (347c-407) of Theodoret of Cyrillus in Syria (c.393-c.466), of Theophylact (11th century), of St. Jerome (c.342-420), of St. Augustine (354-430) and of St. Irenaeus (c.130-c.200), the Bishop of Lyons, author of the Adversus Omnes Haereses.

164 On Filaret, see chapter 7. On his works of Ecclesiastical history see A.Smironov, 'Mitropolit Filaret, and N.Troitsky 'Mitropolit Filaret'. On Platon see K.A.Papmehl, Metropolitan Platon of Moscow.

165 Lyubopytny, Kratkoe nastavlenie, p.217. The promise of success as a result of a proposed system of education is made also in the preface to the Ars Magna of Raymond Lull: see N. Sokolov, 'Filosofiya Raymunda Lyulliia', p.332.

Lyubopytny felt at liberty to recommend books written by members of the Synodal Nikonian Church because, as he wrote, the pastors of the Pomoryan church had allowed the whole church to have "all sorts of heretical and impermissible books, and to read them in full freedom".(166)

Of this freedom Lyubopytny no doubt made use, because among those he quotes one can find some which are very dubious indeed. When it came to reading, his curiosity knew no bounds. One of the most unorthodox books he quotes, and the one which seems to have influenced him more than would seem acceptable for an Old Believer, is Gleb Ivanovich Gromov's Pozorishche strannykh i smeshnykh obryadov pri brakosochetaniyakh raznykh chuzhezemnykh i v Rossii obitayushchikh narodov, i pri tom nechto dlya kholostykh i zhenatykh, which was published in St.Petersburg in 1797.

It is surprising to see how many ideas and even turns of phrase Lyubopytny has borrowed from this book, which is a folkloristic review of the marriage rituals of many people all over the world. It opens with a general statement to the effect that most blessed are those people among whom marriages are free and take place on the exclusive basis of "their personal good will and inclination of the heart" (167). The savages of American Louisiana are described as having marriage rituals which "imitate nature herself" (168). Of the African Hottentots the author writes that in their marriage ritual an elder passes water over the spouses,

166 Lyubopytny, Simvolicheskiy stateynik, f.253.

167 G.I. Gromov, Pozorishche, p.3.

168 Ibid., pp.54-61.

and the more water, the bigger the honour (169). In general the author looks very favourably at the rituals of the more primitive peoples, where "humanity, being ruled by the wise law of nature, prospers" - though he hastens to add that they could be even more perfect if they would add to the law of nature the true law of Christianity (170). He showers the highest praise on the people of Tahiti, the true temple of love, Nouvelle Cythère, where the generation of other human beings is regarded as a "sacred law", and all foreign guests are invited to take pleasure in it. The French indulge in marvellous games of love with the beautiful women of Tahiti (171). While the first part of Gromov's book was dedicated to the customs of peoples outside Russia, in Part II attention is paid to the numerous tribes inside the Russian Empire. There are all sorts of different marriage rituals can be observed, all equally acceptable from the point of view of the substance of marriage (172).

The third part of Gromov's book contains general considerations for both married and unmarried people. This section seems to be the one which has most inspired Lyubopytny. It opens with a general statement, to the effect that marriages can take place anywhere and any time two people of the opposite sex come to a common

169 Ibid., p.71.

170 Ibid., p.109.

171 Ibid., pp.110-111. Gromov quotes extensively from Bougainville, who discovered Tahiti in 1768 and called it a New Cythere. See: L. David Hammond, News from New Cythere and Louis Antoine de Bougainville, Voyage autour du Monde.

172 Gromov, Pozorishche, pp.117-250.

agreement; it would be enough to follow the impulse implanted by nature, were it not for the sake of good customs and political considerations (173). The duty to feed one's offspring has made it necessary to put a limit to fun (predel zabavam). It is the presence of offspring which gives its dignity to marriage, and the reason why it is respected by the most diverse people; marriage is a contract which is common to all populations, the differences being only in the various rituals employed (174). Chastity is a most unnatural state, praised by some heathen sages but in fact contrary to man's natural inclinations. Nature is always in a state of uninterrupted pulsation, and men are obliged to use their "fertile seeds" not only before their Creator, but also in front of their Fatherland. Those who mortify the flesh do nothing but display their ingratitude and hardness of heart (zhestokoserdie). Gromov produces an invective against those who do not put their seed to use, but waste it in perversions of various kinds; the style is not dissimilar from other invectives written by Lyubopytny. Those who indulge in acts of dissolution (rasputstva) are "false philanthropists", they bring no fruit to the fatherland, they waste their lives away in dissolute bachelorhood, while nature wants them to bind themselves in marriage (175). Gromov proceeds then to quote Montesquieu on the

173 Ibid., p.253. Here Gromov quotes Antoine Leonard Thomas on the question of mutual agreement between man and woman. In 1781 in Novikov's printing press in Moscow a translation from Thomas was printed, by the title of 'Opyt o svoystve, o npravakh i o razume zhenshchin v raznykh verakh'.

174 Ibid., pp.257-258.

175 Ibid., pp.260-267.

subject of Roman laws that discriminated against bachelors (176). Then he joins in the eighteenth century controversy on "le luxe", which is blamed for the poverty of the majority of people, and proposes instead a life of domestic tranquillity and fulfillment, having at one's side a faithful and supportive spouse. He observes that marriage can also be useful to scholars, provided that they do not abandon themselves beyond measure to "sensuality" and, in consideration of the fact that their way of life is little suitable to the bond and obligations of marriage, they must find "calm friends who know the world well" in order to lighten their heavy burdens. Marriage is advisable for scholars, to make them more sensitive to human needs and human happiness, and to inspire them with the desire to become useful to society. Leibniz was already fifty years old when he conceived the desire to marry; Halley had to interrupt his observations of the comet because he fell in love with Mary Tooke, and was unable to resume his quiet observations until he married her in 1682. The reading of novels is harmful to women, because it renders them unable to be happily married to ordinary men. Gromov concludes his book with a passionate evocation of the "writer and Citizen of Geneva", famous throughout Europe for his novel on conjugal love, who burned in his hearth with the "sacred fire of nature" and was cruelly deprived of the pleasure of "kissing and embracing his spouse and his children" (177). We can here see by

176; Ibid., p.272. See Montesquieu, De l'Esprit des lois, book XXIII, chapter 21.

177 Ibid., pp.272-301. Books recommending marriage were frequent at the time, see e.g., Nravouchitel'noe razsuzhdenie o supruzheskikh dolzhnostyakh, Novikov's printing press, Moscow, 1780.

what devious routes the ideas of Rousseau and his myth of the noble savage found their way into the semiuncial letters of an Old Believer polemical tract.

The Russian historian A.N.Pypin saw in pietism the roots of freemasonry and identified as one of the most important literary production of pietism the famous Unparteysche Kirchen- und Ketzer - Historie of Gottfried Arnold (1666-1714). This book was directed against "lifeless dogmatism and intolerance of Protestant Orthodoxy", and in it Arnold tried to prove that pietism, persecuted by the Protestant "formalists", was in fact the true substance of Christianity, a Christianity which was already of old to be found in Christians persecuted by the dominant church distorted the Christian faith.

Arnold's book was not, to my knowledge, translated in Russia, or rather it was not printed; but thanks to Pypin we know that it circulated in manuscript form (178). Lyubopytny in his writings frequently quotes a Istoriya gospodina Arnol'da, opisvayushchago pervobytnyi vek Khristianstva (179) and as, to my knowledge, he did not know German, one may speculate that he read Arnold in a manuscript such as the one quoted by Pypin.

178 A.N.Pypin (Russkoe masonstvo, pp.27 and 480-481), mentions a manuscript collection of twelve little volumes of mystical contents which, among others, contained a Kratkaya tserkovnaya istoriya i otryvki iz bol'shoy tserkovnoy istorii Gottfrida Arnol'da. The latter is Arnold's Unparteysche Kirchen- und Ketzer - Historie von Anfang des Neuen Testaments bis auff der Jahr Christi 1688, Frankfurt am Main, 1699 - 1700.
179 Lyubopytny quotes Arnold in Pokazatel'stva Khristovoy tserkvi, f.16 and in O brake, ff.22-26.

Although Lyubopytny's ideas resemble those of Arnold to an intriguing extent, and a study of Arnold's influences on Lyubopytny's writings could be most rewarding to the researcher, here I will only attempt a synthesis of those of Arnold's ideas which justify what I have just said. If Lyubopytny frequently mentions the early Church, Arnold's central theme is the Urkirche. As a recent student of Arnold's thought has written, "in the primitive Church [Urkirche] he found not only the criteria for a criticism of the Church of his time, but also, in the first place, the true form of Christianity... by means of which to free it from the rigidity of the doctrinal systems and lead it towards a living and active faith". In the primitive church Arnold thus saw the true Church, the one inside which faith became a living reality; the history of the Urkirche was not just history, but a paradigm of how the church should strive to be (180). It can be easily imagined with what interest this idea of a primitive Church, more ancient than the Russian Church ever was, can have been viewed by an Old Believer like Lyubopytny. Arnold believed that in the Early Church all Christians were brethren who had undergone regeneration through conversion to the faith. Even in the present time Christians would strive for "regeneration" (Wiedergeburt), and by means of it bypass all confessional divisions which had arisen in the

180 See J. Buechsel, op.cit., pp.195,25,32. The work in which Arnold offers the example of the primitive Church as a paradigm is Die Erste Liebe der Gemeindes Jesus Christ, Frankfurt, 1696.

course of the history of the institutional church: "propter rituum externorum diversitatem concordiam fratrem non dirimere" (181). Arnold's ideal is "impartiality" (Unparteylichkeit) as a position beyond confessional divisions, and a return to the living Christ. In this context, Arnold also refuses all distinctions between a profane and a sacred truth, between profane and ecclesiastical, sacred history: "the enlightened one does not stand on the side of a particular church, he stands instead on God's side". In the Early Church there still exists an identity between inner and exterior manifestations. To an exterior and purely institutional church Arnold contrasts "an invisible church to which all regenerated individuals belong" (182). We have met such an idea in Lyubopytny, and in the same context of an opposition to the institutional church. Lyubopytny defined as sectarians those Christians who believed only one type of marriage ritual to be the correct one, and stated that a true son of light (syn sveta) considered meaningless the external church. Moreover, in an interconfessional perspective, he considered the various rituals of all churches to be of equal value (183). Arnold believed that the true church is there, where there is true faith. Not the institution, but the Holy Ghost is the foundation of the Church. The clergy is not entitled to special status in

181 This in Arnold's Fratrum sororumque appellatio of 1696, quoted by Buechsel, op.cit., p.28.

182 Quoted by Buechsel, op.cit., pp.81,34,13.

183 Lyubopytny, O brake, ff.3v,2v; Otvvet khristovoy tserkvi, f.117.

the church because all Christians partake of the Holy Ghost. Arnold believed that the institutional church had become corrupted since the fourth century when imperial power in the person of the Emperor Constantine had coopted it into the structure of power. Since then, the true church had become invisible and "the history of the church is the history of the complete sundering of the true and visible church. The true church is hidden and oppressed; God's kingdom is inward". A consequence of this conception of the Church is the ideal of tolerance. Tolerance remains the only means by which divisions inside the churches can be overcome, and pristine unity can be restored. At the same time, Christians must not remain attached to the false visible churches. In Lyubopytny too there is an appeal to tolerance and at the same time the concern that Christians should not accept the sacraments of the false Nikonian church. The dominant church in Arnold's view is corrupted by its association with temporal power; the true church can survive in its integrity only in the communio sanctorum (184). Lyubopytny too speaks of the "community of holy and enlightened men" which is the reason why the Pomoryan church could have pastors instead of priests; the Old Believers, besides, brought forward another argument for the irrelevance of the official church: the abolition of priesthood under the rule of Antichrist (185). True Christians can be recognised by their active faith, by their good works and by their living up to the ideal, and without hypocrisy.

184 See Buechsel, op.cit., pp.57-58, 68-75, 95-96, 45.

185 Lyubopytny, O brake, f.5v.

Lyubopytny in this same spirit criticized the hypocrisy of the Theodosians and advocated the creation of rituals which would reconcile life and faith. Lyubopytny's ideas can also be recognised in Arnold's conception of Gottesdienst as a true interior service to God in the soul of the believer, in really experienced feelings of "faith, love, fear, hope, trust in God and love of one's neighbours"; material churchbuildings play no role whatsoever: the whole world is God's temple. "Exterior pomp" is unnecessary and unchristian, prayer and churchsing are nothing but "the two most distinguished exercises of the public and individual service to God". The two sacraments, baptism and the eucharist are analyzed by Arnold in their double meaning of mysterion and, as in Augustine's theology, signs of holy and divine. But Arnold remains in a relativist position; "it is difficult to find in the old fathers a fixed and continued use of this word, similar to the one of today" (186): baptism itself is nothing but a sign of conversion and rebirth. Arnold developed his conception of the visible church in his Ketzer-Historie where he wrote that the dominant church was the real heresy.

"Behind the systems of power and constriction, which opposed the freedom of conscience in matters of faith, stood the pursuit of personal advantage, of glory, office and power. Increasingly this behaviour on the part of the clergy had the effect that the true Christians, the so-called heretics, no longer accepted the church and refused the world. So that finally they rejoiced in the name of heretics, and, conversely, had to be nearly ashamed

186 Quoted by Buechsel, op.cit., pp.62-63.

of the name of orthodoxy". The dominant church had become a "whore", while the true mother of the believers was "the heavenly Jerusalem" (187). Arnold was nevertheless willing to admit that true believers could also be found in the dominant church; the Holy Ghost knew no confessional boundaries. In a sentence which can be found also in Lyubopytny, he stated that "ignorance is the mother of all sins" (188).

Gromov and Arnold are, of the authors read by Lyubopytny, the most exciting ones for the reason that in them one can most clearly see the influence of ideas and systems of thought not usually and immediately associated with the Old Believers. But this section would not be complete if we omitted to mention other books, which, if less immediately striking, are nonetheless an indication of Lyubopytny's vast interests and the wide scope of his reading in the satisfaction of his voracious appetite. Apart from Gromov, Lyubopytny refers to two other books of folklore: Yazycheskiye istorii v opisanií brachnykh obryadov; and Sibirskaya istoriya (189). The Old Believers have from the very beginning been acutely interested in history, and Lyubopytny is no exception. He quotes two famous historians, Tatishchev and Karamzin (190), the Protestant historian Johann

187 Quoted by Buechsel, op.cit., p.90,28.

188 Quoted by Buechsel, op.cit., pp.97, 48.

189 Lyubopytny, Otvet Khristovoy tserkvi, f.120v. I have not been able to identify the first; the second title is S.K., 7800.

190 Lyubopytny, Brachnoe vrachevstvo (St.Petersburg edition), f.47; Otvet Khristovoy tserkvi (Appologiya edition), f.106. On the Old Believers' interest in history see N.Yu.Bubnov, Istochniki po istorii, p.76.

Lorenz von Mosheim (1694-1755) (191) and the Russkoy Sinopsis of Innokenty Gizel' (192). He refers to the Byzantine historians Ioann Zonar (twelfth century) (193), to Georg'os Pakhymeres, (thirteenth century) (194), and to the Bulgarian historian Jovan Raich (195). Lyubopytny also read the books of history Rossiyskoe Yadro (196), the Po'skii Letopisets (197), the Rossiyskie ezhegodnye kalendari, printed by the Academy of Sciences (198), and Opyt nachertaniya rossiyskogo grazhdanskogo prava, which could perhaps be an inexact reference to one of Z.A. Goryushkin's handbooks of law (199). This list alone should be enough to see that Lyubopytny would put his hands on anything he

191 In O brake, ff.22-26. At the Troitsko-Sergeevskaya Lavra the books of Mosheim were used for the study of ecclesiastical history. See R.L. Nichols, Metropolitan Filaret, p.42.

192 Ibid. The Sinopsis was printed in Kiev in 1674, it was the first book of history printed in Russia, and its basic idea was the necessity of uniting all the Slavonic peoples. See Ukrainskie knigi, n.124. Innokenty Gizel' was also the author of Mir s bogom cheloveku, Kiev, 1669, of which the Old Believers had a very low opinion: see A.N. Robinson, Bor'ba idey, p.42.

193 Lyubopytny, O brake, ff.22-26.

194 Lyubopytny, Brachnoe vrachevstvo (St.Petersburg edition), f.48.

195 Ibid., f.47 and O brake, ff.22-26. Jovan Raich wrote Istoriya raznykh slovenskikh narodov, Vienna 1794, St. Petersburg (abridged edition) 1795.

196 Brachnoe vrachevstvo, f.47. This is the book by A.I. Mankiev (?-1723), Yadro rossiyskoy istorii, 1st ed. Moscow, 1770, S.K., 4037-4040.

197 Ibid., f.47. On the Chronica by Mattias Stricovius, first published in Koenigsberg in 1582, see A.I. Rogov, Russko-pol'skie kul'turnye svyazi.

198 Lyubopytny, Otvét Khristovoy tserkvi, f.13lv.

199 Ibid., f.47. Z.A. Goryushkin (1748-1811) was a professor of law at Moscow University; he is the author of Opisanie sudebnykh deystviy, Moscow 1805-8, and of Pukovodstvo k poznanyu rossiyskogo zakonodavstva, Moscow, 1811-18. See N.M. Korkunov, Istoriya filosofii prava, pp.311-347, and R.S. Wortman The development of a Russian legal consciousness, p.32. Goryushkin's Rukovodstvo is quoted in support of Old Believer marriages by Golubov in Istoricheskoe izveshchenie, f.4.

could read, printed and manuscript alike. There was boundless scope for influences from the outside.

Progress was defined by Lyubopytny according to criteria of education, religious freedom and enlightenment. Conversely, superstition, ignorance and fanaticism, even among the Old Believers, were regarded as the inevitable product of ages of darkness, of the ignorance due to a life oppressed by tyranny and persecution. The most relevant of Lyubopytny's writings for an analysis of his political and historical ideas, and of his criteria of judgement in assessing the various rulers of Russia, is Khronologicheskoe yadro starovercheskoy tserkvi (Chronological kernel of the Old Believer church), written in 1822 (200). In this history of the Old Believers events are expounded in an annalistic fashion. While the account is often confused and unreliable for events prior to Catherine's accession, the events following it are expounded in more reliable detail (201). Lyubopytny does not confine himself to internal Old Believer matters, and interprets the history of his church in the more general context of Russian history. Peter the Great elicited a mixed evaluation. In general, Lyubopytny praised rulers when they promoted culture and education, and criticized them when they tampered with national customs and religious beliefs. He is horrified by Peter's policy of compulsory shaving of beards, of forcing the German costume and foreign customs:

200 Khronologicheskoe yadro starovercheskoy tserkvi ob"-yasnayushchee otlichniyye eya deyaniya s 1650 po 1814 god, is resumed by N.I. Kostomarov in Istoriya raskola u raskol'nikov.
201 N.I. Kostomarov, op.cit., pp.234-236.

"Russia, hearing of this most dreadful compulsion befalling every Russian, was all in agitation and astonishment; faith and man himself will be disfigured, a terrible impiety will be accomplished against God who has created us perfect. All Russian humanity replenished with its lament the whole transparent air, covered itself in tears, heaped curses on this hellish thing. But the pious ones, disregarding all those terrible persecutions, raised their holy hands to heaven, mournfully sobbing begged God, their master, to defend them in His infinite charity from such bestial fanaticism, and to avenge them in his rightful judgement".

The prohibition to sell the Russian costume elicited this comment: "for the philosopher this fanaticism will be nothing but barbarity and inhumanity" (202). As for the imposition of the double poll-tax on the Old Believers Lyubopytny comments are most eloquent:

"In this matter philosophy can behold the riotousness of the tsars, see how much of the human race they exterminated in Russia before the times of the most wise Catherine, how many hundreds of thousands of their subjects they pursued in other countries with their barbaric laws! All this shall the wise see! O tsars, tsars! O ones most crude! [O, tsari, tsari! Grubeyshie]" (203).

202 N.I.Kostomarov, op.cit., p.237. In this Lyubopytny's judgement coincides with Karamzin's: see R.Pipes Karamzin's Memoir on Ancient and Modern Russia, and A.N.Pypin, Obshchestvennoe dvizhenie, pp.229-233. A similar criticism of a policy of imitation of foreign customs can be seen in Novikov's journal Koshelek (see G.W.Jones 'Novikov's') and in the Decembrist A.D.Ulybyshev: see M.Raëff, The Decembrist Movement, pp.60-66. In fact all three Russians derived this idea from Montesquieu, Des Esprit des lois, vol.I, ch.306. Similar comments on the progress promoted by Peter the Great, together with a proposal to restore the preNikonian Church were contained in a manuscript, composed by the Polish revolutionary Iosif Elensky (1756-1813) by the title Blagovest' Izrailyu Rossijskomu, to est' priverzhennym k bogu staroveram blagochestivym. See G.G.Frumenkov, Solovetski monastyr', p.183.

203 N.I. Kostomarov, op.cit., p.237.

The same Peter, on the other hand, is praised by Lyubopytny for the foundation of the Academy of Sciences. Elizabeth, in spite of having persecuted the Old Believers, is praised for the foundation of Moscow University and also because "having observed in the churches grandees and people of other positions in society in the act of smelling the accursed tobacco, and the impious disgrace deriving from that, she forbade the smelling of tobacco inside churches". In general, throughout the Khronologicheskoe yadro, Lyubopytny praises all measures intended to promote popular education (204). Lyubopytny blames the times of persecution for the ignorance of the Old Believers and their fanaticism. In the first part of his work he reports the events of the time of persecution, which goes from the schism itself until the accession of Catherine the Great, and describes the subterfuges which the Old Believers were forced to use in order to hide their faith (205). What in the Khronologicheskoe yadro is profusely illustrated with historical examples, in another work is stated as a general historical law.

"The experience of recurring circumstances gives us a sufficient conviction that the weakmindedness of the Old Believers is directly proportional to the roughness and hardness of the surrounding world and the violence of persecution of the holy religion. But, if the Old Believers were under the inspiration of the Holy Muses, and the external world were ruled by Wisdom and Love, then certainly in all solemnity they would start again a golden age and everywhere there would flow the rapid current of peace and propitious activity" (206).

204 N.I. Kostomarov, op.cit., pp.237-238.

205 Ibid., pp.241-243.

206 Lyubopytny, Otvet Khristovoy tserkvi, f.114.

Catherine's time had been such a golden age. Although, as Lyubopytny observes, in Catherine's time "the scarcity of faith was increasing in Russia, because French education, German fashions and other coarse immoralities gained strength", on the other hand the new conditions of freedom encouraged the flourishing of culture among the Old Believers, the end of clandestine activities, varied and intense debates, and even conversions of Nikonians to the true faith of the Old Believers (207). Above all, Catherine, with her policy of religious toleration had opposed the persecution of the Old Believers by the Synodal Church, who had to witness powerless the funeral processions of the Old Believers in the roads of St.Petersburg "while the Nikonians, for their old malice, were left to gnash their teeth and let forth a stream of oaths against heaven and the saints" (208). The age of Paul I is described as one of serious reversal to persecution, a time during which the Old Believers retreated in fearful silence: "now because of the severity of the supreme power all go around in silence". With

207 N.I.Kostomarov, op.cit., pp.243-250. Catherine was praised by Lyubopytny also in O brake, f.14, for granting all freedoms, the freedom to marry included, to the Old Believers, with ukaz of 14 December 1762 (PSZ,XVI, n.11725) and ukaz of 17 March 1775, art.17 (PSZ,XX,n.14275). Old Believer marriages are not actually mentioned in these ukazy; on the other hand, the Professor of law Z.A. Goryushkin interpreted them in the sense of allowing the Old Believers to marry outside the Church: see his Rukovodstvo k poznaniyu, vol. 1, Moscow, 1811, p.109; this book was known to Lyubopytny (see n.215).

208 N.I. Kostomarov, op.cit., p.243.

Alexander, at least up to the year 1814 when the narrative is interrupted, there was only a partial reversal to the freedom of Catherine's time; under Alexander Old Believers who converted Nikonians to the Old Faith were treated with increased severity (209). Lyubopytny differs from other Old Believers in his conception of history. His criteria for judging any particular time is not the degree of its deflection from the static model of the pious pre-Nikonian time; more than in terms of tradition, Lyubopytny judges each epoch in terms of reason. From the point of view of the progress of reason, even such venerable Old Believer fathers as the Denisov brothers can be subjected to criticism and, when their pronouncements seem unreasonable, Lyubopytny does not hesitate to label them as "slave of prejudice ... deprived of the illumination of philosophy. In general, on the assumption that history progresses from lesser to greater enlightenment, he believed that little wisdom could be expected from the pious ancestors, who, "as to wisdom, were rather deficient" (211). Progress among the Old Believers cannot be set apart from the general course of the historical process, and the evolution of the mores of society as a whole. When judging of past dispositions of the Old Believer church, the "dukh vremeni", the Zeitgeist, must be taken into account in order to pass an historically sound judgement (212). Lyubopytny's faith in progress had two repercussions. He saw both

209 N.I. Kostomarov, op.cit., pp.250-52.

210 Lyubopytny, Tserkov'Khristova uzakonila, ff.108v-109.

211 Lyubopytny, Simvolicheskiy stateynik, f.239v.

212 Lyubopytny, Otvety Khristovoy tserkvi, f.184.

the church and the "moral world", as he called ethics, in a process of uninterrupted development. For Lyubopytny the creativity of the church does not stop at any given stage; all innovations, after some time, become legitimized by tradition, and that tradition in its turn gives them a special aura of respectability (213). Lyubopytny saw no reason why one day the same should not have happened to the ritual of marriage created by him, which for the time being was still considered new (214). Customs are moral phenomena, and Lyubopytny looks historically at them; he speaks of "infancy of the present moral world" (215), and sees the perfection of ethics and morality as a function of the progress of reason and education, and of the progress of the individual from the darkness of prejudice to the light of reason and true faith. He even laughs at the bigoted horror of the darker Old Believer bukvalisty (literalists) for things new, saying ironically that for them novelty is a dirty word (216).

Lyubopytny's language deserves a study of its own; it is not less idiosyncratic than his system of thought. At a time when the language of the clergy of the Synodal church was being fixed in a rigid set of rules (217), Lyubopytny was freely, if clandestinely, borrowing from the most varied sources, developing a style which as time went by became more and more

213 Lyubopytny, Simvolicheskiy stateynik, f.241; Otvet Khristovoy tserkvi, f.116.

214 Lyubopytny, Otvety Khristovoy tserkvi, f.184.

215 Ibid., f.186.

216 Lyubopytny, Simvolicheskiy stateynik, f.254.

217 See V.M.Zhivov, 'Lingvisticheskoe blagochestie'; on the Russian language in Lyubopytny's time, see the recent B.A. Uspensky, Is istorii russkogo literaturnogo yazyka.

ornate (218). He combined the jargon of the Enlightenment (219) with terms in Old Church Slavonic, words of foreign origin such as dogmatizm, tiranizm and the like, with words of his own invention such as bukvalizm, apostatstvo, brakoborstvo (220). It would be interesting to compare Lyubopytny to other eccentrics and "samouchki", like Chekhov's Vasily Semi-Bulatov, the retired Don Cossack of the village of Bliny-S^oedeny; the similarities between his language and Lyubopytny's are indeed amusing (221).

Lyubopytny took very seriously his task to protect and instruct the less articulated who needed the service of his pen against, as it were, the windmills of superstition. He was indeed the spokesman of what seems to have been a perhaps not very large group of Old Believer merchants of which Monin was the most prominent. These merchants felt a great need to justify their family life morally and had grown tired of the continuous strictures and humiliations to which they were subjected by the priestless elders. We are offered a glimpse of a new

218 For this reason A.Brovkovich, in Opisanie, p.332, excluded that the author of O klyuchakh, of 1822, could be the same as the author of Brachnoe vrachevstvo of 1800.

219 In n.4 of the present chapter it has been suggested that Lyubopytny may have attended the Moscow Commercial Academy. Similarities can be observed between his language and the style of one of the teachers of that school, Aleksey Pomeryantsev, who taught Russian literature and catechism: see his Rech' o tom kakie sut' sredstva naibolee sposobstvuyushchee yunosham k dostizheniyu prosveshcheniya, Moscow, 1807.

220 See N.Popov, Kratkiy ocherk, p.22. Foreign words were also used by Andrey Denisov. See J.Chrysostomus, Die "Pomorskie otvety", p.50.

221 See A.P.Chekhov, Pis'mo k uchenomu sosedu, 1880, Izbrannye sochineniya v dvukh tomakh, vol.1, pp.37-40.

relationship between author and public in a letter which a St. Petersburg merchant by the initials of D.B., wrote on 29 December 1836 to Lyubopytny asking him to help and defend with good authoritative arguments the institution of marriage which was so fundamental for their family life (222). "Most honoured and distinguished in writing Pavel Onufrevich", wrote the merchant lamenting the needs which the extinction of priesthood had left unfulfillable; marriages were entered into in spite of the lack of ecclesiastical sanction, but with great anxiety at the foreseeable consequences which such a step would entail on the day of the Final Judgement. Christians, wrote the merchant, were utterly perplexed, and hesitated before doing anything, for fear of heresy; they had therefore decided to consult Lyubopytny, who was highly reputed for his erudition. The author of the letter would never have disturbed Pavel Onufrevich had the matter been of his sole concern, but a great number of Christians had been raising objections which had to be answered. The questions proposed were twelve, all concerned the legitimacy of marriages celebrated by laymen. D.B. concluded by apologising for his formulation of the question, which he feared somebody as learned as Lyubopytny would have found badly drafted. But he was little acquainted with the "rules of scholarship". But then, he added, isn't the truth more important than rhetoric virtuosism? (223). Lyubopytny answered repeating patiently his basic arguments, illustrated the manuscript with a

222 Lyubopytny, Otvety Khristovoy tserkvi, f.170.

223 Loc.cit.

224 See illustration n.2.

drawing (224) and concluded: "And now, respected question-giver, the kingdom of God lies open in front of you, here you see the fountain of Eden, drink and quench your thirst, sooth your doubts, dispel your childish fancies ... come to the Church, and she will joyously welcome you with open arms, and an angelical song will be sung in one spirit, one voice ..." (225). We do not know how justified Lyubopytny's confidence was - could D.B. have been the offended benefactor, D.F.Bolotov, who sent Lyubopytny away from his house?

As for the response of the Old Believer reading public at large, it seems that Lyubopytny was mostly appreciated for his work of compilation. Even Theodosians, for lack of other instruments of consultation, quoted his dictionary when writing about their leaders, although they, of course, purged them of the passages that they deemed offensive (226). But it seems unlikely that his more general ideas could have taken root except among a small minority; his innovations and departures from standard Old Believer assumptions and mentality were too numerous and too radical. His references to nature and natural reason, producing what could be termed the Sturm und Drang of Old Believer history, his optimistic faith in progress and education, his stress on the uninterrupted creativity of the church, run by a body of enlightened and unordained laymen, the innovation of raising to three the number of sacraments available to the priestless, and

225 Ibid., ff.217v-218.

226 Kovylin even encouraged his followers to destroy enemy writings (see his Razsmotrenie, p.84), but in the 1860s a Theodosian who was writing on Kovylin made use, for lack of others Lyubopytny's description of him: see Kratkiye zamechaniya, f.3v

his lack of sensitivity to the thematics of the Apocalypse - all in all, the bulk of his innovations was too weighty, amounting to a revolution in that uneasily defined entity called Old Believer mentality. In this respect, it is significant that in later times a priestless Old Believer who came extremely close to Lyubopytny and shared his enthusiasm for the mission of giving firm foundations to the institution of marriage, Pavel Prussky, eventually went over to the dominant church (227). On the other hand, it cannot be denied that Lyubopytny found quite a number of devout followers and it can be argued that, had it not been that Nicholas I reverted to a policy of intolerance, his ideas could have found greater following in a community not confronted by the constant threat of persecution. In fact some of the most striking innovations are not incompatible departures from priestless conceptions, such as that, in the Last Days, the "moral world", left without a visible church, would be administered by unordained but enlightened laymen. This was the idea of a lay Church, an idea that the pietists would not have found incomprehensible. This last observation brings us to the question of Lyubopytny's place in the culture of his time. It has been stated that in the last decade of his rule Alexander I "raised pietism to the status of a virtual state ideology" (228). As we have seen, Lyubopytny was well acquainted with one of the most important pietist thinkers, Gottfried Arnold, and openly quoted his book. He does not seem to have been directly

227 See introduction.

228 D.W. Treadgold, The West in Russia and China, p.116.

influenced by masonic and alchemical literature, at least he does not quote any of the authors representative of that cultural trend, such as Arndt, Lopukhin, Labzin and others, though he speaks of "Sionskaya tserkov'" (229). On the other hand, masonic influences were at the time pervasive and could emanate from unsuspected sources. Masons were to be found even among the Russian clergy (230). The Bible Society founded in Russia in 1812, also found some response in Lyubopytny; he encourages the reading of the Holy Scriptures, and seems to share in the spirit of interdenominational tolerance of other faiths, while at the same time being concerned, in this very spirit of mutual respect, that Christians should remain faithful to their faith of birth.

Perhaps the best way to understand Lyubopytny is to compare him to another thinker and writer who, like the Russian Old Believer, had set for himself the task of enabling his own people to participate in modern culture and society without a loss of religious and cultural identity. Moses Mendelssohn (1729-1786) had certainly a more brilliant career in Berlin than his curious Moscow counterpart, yet the similarities are striking. Convinced that the Jews should remain faithful to their religious traditions, he strove to make them abandon their prejudices and

229 On Labzin's Sionskiy vestnik, and its ideal of religious tolerance, very similar to Lyubopytny's, see A.Vasil'ev, 'Veroterpimost', pp.264-272; see also Chistovich, Pukovodyashchie, pp.191-201, and Cohen Zacek, The Russian Bible Society, pp.103-165. Curiously enough, Lyubopytny does not to my knowledge refer to Jung-Stilling who, according to N.F.Sumstov (op.cit., pp.12-13) was popular among the Old Believers.

230 See T. Bakounine, Repertoire..., p.XXIII.

narrow parochialism, and embrace instead a form of theologia naturalis and the secular culture of the Enlightenment. He fought for Jewish civil rights, but at the same time he did not regard the Jews as God's chosen people; God wanted all humanity to achieve happiness and salvation, and the sole reason for different rituals and churches was, in Mendelssohn's view, the "imperfect intellectual and moral state of society". Although reason alone would be enough as a foundation of a world religion, he believed that "Judaism as a revealed religion, consists solely and exclusively of revealed laws of God's worship" (231). In Mendelssohn, like in Lyubopytny, religious tolerance and loyalty to one's faith and rituals of birth are seen to coexist. In both cases, there was a vision of a rational pluralistic society in which it would have been possible to combine loyalty to the traditions of the past and to national identity with the demands of the contemporary world. The supranational and secular ideals of the Enlightenment seemed to offer a viable solution both to the Jewish and the Old Believer diaspora (232).

231 Quoted in I.E. Barzilay, 'Moses Mendelssohn', p.81. See also M.A.Meyer, The origins of the modern Jew, pp.11-28; A. Springer 'Enlightened absolutism and Jewish reform'. Two works of Mendelssohn's were translated in Russian: Razsuzhdenie o dukhovnom svoystve dushi chelovecheskoy, Moscow, 1806, and Fedon, ili o bezsmertii dushi v trekh razgovorakh, Moscow, 1811.

232 The ideals of the Enlightenment remained a source of inspiration for the Old Believers even at the beginning of this century: see e.g., L.Bystrov, 'Vol'ter o veroterpimosti'. An interesting case of a Jew converting to the Old Faith is the one of V.M. Karlovich, author of Istoricheskkiye izsledovaniya, who was reviled as "raskol'nichestvuyushchii zhid" ('Zagranichnaya raskol'nicheskaya literatura', BS, 1886, vol.7). See also V.M. Karlovicha, 'Vospominaniya docheri ob otse', and Arseny, Pis'mo V.M. Karlovichu, of 18 June 1889.

Chapter 6

Sergey Semenovich Gnusin (?-1839)

Sergey Semenovich Gnusin is the most important Theodosian writer. He lived and wrote in Preobrazhenskoe, where he remained until, on learning of a denunciation against him, he went into hiding. In 1821 he was arrested, and after a period of imprisonment first in Moscow and then in Schluesselburg he was exiled to Solovki in April 1823, where he died on 27 June 1839. The date of his birth is not known. Apparently he had been born a serf, and worked as a clerk in the Troitsky iron foundry of I.P.Osokin, which was situated in Ufa, in the guberniya of Orenburg (1). According to a report of the Metropolitan of Tobol'sk Silvestr, the Osokin foundries were a hotbed of schismatics, and a place of refuge for runaway serfs and clandestine Old Believers (2). Gnusin, allegedly born in the dominant church, may have met some Old Believer preacher who converted him to the old faith and induced him to join an Old Believer community. A story even tells of how Gnusin suffered diabolical visions while praying in the Nikonian fashion, and how devils troubled him again even after his conversion (3). The year of his escape from the foundries is not known. It is said that he first took refuge with a holy hermit

1 See Nikanor, 'Gnusin', p.398; that Gnusin worked as a clerk: Istoriya o yavlenii besov Gnusinu, f.123; on the Troitsky foundry: S.S. Gnusin, Pandekta vtoraya, f.10v; H. Beyer, 'Marx, Weber', pp.556-7. I.P.Osokin was a friend of the poet G.R.Derzhavin, and passed him stories on the Old Believers: see V.P.Stepanov, 'K agiografii', p.116. In TsGIA, fond. 1284, op.195, no.3, 1819, Po ukazu Prav. Senata o nesoglasiiakh, f.45, Gnusin's landlord is given as the retired Guard ensign Gavriil Osokin.

2 See ODDS, vol.31, St. Petersburg, 1909, n.75, 24 March 1752.

3 Istoriya o yavlenii besov, ff.123-124.

in the forest (4), then lived for a while in Saratov under the cover of a soldier's passport, together with a fugitive peasant woman with whom he preached the Old Faith and the abstention from marriage. Still preaching, Gnusin travelled up the Volga to Kazan', from Kazan' he reached Nizhny-Novgorod, and around 1803 he reached Moscow (5). Preobrazhenskoe was the refuge of all runaway priestless Old Believers who succeeded in making it to Moscow. There Gnusin received the documents of a certain Petr Nikiforov, who in 1796 had been registered in the guild of painters (6). In the Preobrazhenskoe Theodosian community, it was common practice to treasure the residence permits (vidy na zhitel'stva) of deceased persons. They were handed over to fugitive peasants to help them to settle in Moscow. The documents of this Petr Nikiforov must have been particularly suitable to Gnusin, because Petr Nikiforov was registered as a widower and Gnusin did not in fact have a wife. Nikiforov also was a painter, and Gnusin did in fact paint

4 Ibid., f.124.

5 Gnusin is the author of a Poslanie pravoveruyushchim khristianam sela Nekuza of 1803, therefore his arrival in Moscow dates from at least then. See Nikanor, op.cit., p.399. This date as a terminus post quem would be confirmed by a denunciation of 1819 according to which Gnusin had escaped "sixteen years ago"; see TsGIA, fond.1284, op.195, no. 3, 1819, Po ukažu..., cit., f.45.

6 This, at least, according to Istoriya yavleniya besov Gnusinu, f.122v. Here it is stated that in the "Moskovskii Ikonnyi tsekh" of 1796, a certain Petr Nikiforov is registered as the widower of a certain Maria Ivanovna. This Petr Nikiforov is alleged to be one of the identities used by Gnusin in order to escape the authorities. In another document this Petr Nikiforov is said to have been a serf who had been emancipated by his landlord, a certain Shaposhnikov of Saratov, and who handed over to Gnusin his manumission document, in order to help him to acquire a new civil identity. See TsGIA, fond.1284, op.195, no.3, 1819, loc.cit.

icons as well as broadsheets which he used for the propagation of his doctrines. In Moscow he became the best calligrapher of Preobrazhenskoe; he was particularly skilled in the imitation of the old printed characters (7). In 1813, Gnusin decided to get in touch with his previous landlord Osokin, in order to procure a real emancipation from him. His petition was accompanied by a declaration on his behalf signed by a certain falconer Andrey Sharov and a group of Kazan' friends. The act of emancipation which he eventually received enabled Gnusin to register under the name of Sergey Semenovich Gnusin as a Moscow meshchanin (8). Much was made by Gnusin's opponents of his changes of identity. Lyubopytny, for instance, calls Gnusin "semiimennaya osoba i grazhdanin vsey Rossii" (sevennamed person and citizen of all Russia) (9). That he should have had seven names was a very important device to bring home associations with the seven-headed beast of the Apocalypse; well known is the attack on Martin Luther as the "seven-headed heretic" (10). In one manuscript there is a Kartina porazheniya Gnusina (Broadsheet of Gnusin's defeat). This is a sketch of a broadsheet which was intended as a denunciation of Gnusin and of his doctrines. A list of his seven names forms part of the attack. The list is rather overstretched; in actual fact Gnusin only used four of the names, Petr Nikiforov, Sergey Semenovich Gnusin, Mikhail Vasil'ev, under

7 A. Titov, Dnevnyye dazornyye zapisi..., (entry 9 January 1845), p.11. See also Nikanor, op.cit., p.400.

8 Nikanor (op.cit., p.398), writes that one cannot be certain this was his real name. See TsGIA, fond.1284, op.195, no.3, 1819, loc.cit.

9 Lyubopytny, Istoricheskii slovar', p.142.

10 See G. Wiedermann, 'Cochlaeus as a polemicist,' pp.195-206.

which name Gnusin used to sign his missives and Ioann, which is how he signed his great work, the Novye Pandekty (New Pandects) . The other names given in the Kartina are rather definitions of him; these are: widower, bachelor, nastoyatel' of the Preobrazhenskoe community (11). Having listed these names, the Kartina continues with some verses to impress upon the reader the connection between Gnusin's fluctuating identity and the devilishness of his theories (12). But even without as many as seven names, continues the author of the Kartina, the one name of Gnusin would have been enough for a mind with a realist, as opposed to a nominalist approach to names, to understand of what substance he was moulded, for Gnusin derived from "gnusnoe", i.e., "vile", "foul", because inspired by the devil: "his lips are slanderous for he slanders God, His name, His settlements and those who live in the Heavens" (13). In any case, four names, as we shall see in the next chapter, were more than enough to make him suspicious in the eyes of the authorities. In Moscow, Gnusin lived in Preobrazhenskoe, where he was nastavnik of the female section.

11 See Kartina porazheniya Gnusina, f.118v.

12 This is the text of the verses (loc.cit.): "Sed'mi imyanni sey zloslovit Boga sam / Bezbrachno zlo ego kosnulos' nebesam. / Ot Boga chto zakon v nature razrushaet / Otverg on brak detey priemstvo istreblyaet / Mechistu strast' lyubvi kak d'yavol umnozhaet / Ot Boga dannyykh chad kresh'enyay lishaet / Kto adsko zlo sie za Svyato pochitaet / Za to sam Bog selo zlodeya porazhaet!"

13 Ibid., f.124v.

His preaching was very successful among the women of the rich merchant families; some of them left their homes to go and live in Preobrazhenskoe under Gnusin's moral supervision (14). But Gnusin's authority was not limited to the boundaries of the female section. It extended to all communities which were in touch with Moscow, and which had been reached by his holy reputation (15). In Preobrazhenskoe, Gnusin had the complete trust of Kovylin, who relied on his skills as a polemicist. He also composed the Ustav which has remained in use in the Preobrazhenskoe chapels until the present day (16). The circumstances of his arrest will be discussed in the next chapter. The next pages will be devoted to his writings and his ideas.

14 Sinitsyn, Istoriya Preobrazhenskogo kladbishcha, p.34.

15 See the titles of Gnusin's letters in Nikanor, op.cit., p.400. On Gnusin's reputation as a saint, see TsGIA, fond.1473, op.1, no.12, Zhurnal Komiteta of 22 September 1822, f.148.

16 Sergey Semenovich Gnusin, Bogosluzhebnyy ustav.

Gnusin's writings can be divided into theoretical and polemical. His most important work of theory are the Novye Pandekty (17). In the best medieval and Byzantine tradition, it is not presented as an original product, being a compilation from authoritative sources, a florilegium. Gnusin could have repeated John of Damascus's famous $\epsilon\rho\omega\ \epsilon\mu\acute{o}\nu\ \mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\acute{o}\varsigma$ ("What I say is not original") (18). The Novye Pandekty were completed in the years after Napoleon's invasion of Russia (19). They were divided into four books, which in their turn are subdivided into nine parts. The first book comprises an opening part concerning the Orthodox faith, a second concerning the church and its rituals, and a third on the theory of icons. The second book contains two parts on the acceptance of heretics, and on the

17 The title itself of Gnusin's work is very traditional. G.A. Maloney (A History of Orthodox Theology, p.15), writes that "During the Moslem invasions of the Byzantine Empire, collections called pandectes were written in Greek to provide an encyclopaedia of the ascetical life in one volume". Two of the more popular were translated into Slavonic and reached Russia. They were the Pandekty of the monk Antiochos of Montenegro (seventh century) and the Pandekty of Nikon of Montenegro (eleventh century)". On the latter see I. Sreznevsky, Svedeniya i zametki, pp.217-296. Of these two the most popular among the Old Believers was the Kniga Nikona, igumena Chernyya Gory which contained both the Taktikon and the Pandekty. See Budovnits, Slovar', p.209.

18 See Hans Georg Beck, Das byzantinische Jahrtausend, p.175. Gnusin's work is best understood keeping in mind the convention of the Greek florilegium. See Beck, op.cit., pp.175-6.

19 According to the Kartina yavleniya besov Gnusinu the first volume of the Novye Pandekty was composed in 1810. In the Pandekta vtoraya, f.18 the year 1819 is given: probably the year of completion; at f.17 there are some acrostic verses in which Gnusin is described as a strannik; now, as we shall see in chapter seven, Gnusin had to leave Moscow and take up the life of a strannik in 1816. It must be therefore surmised that he completed his work after he had already left Moscow.

sacraments. In book three there are two parts, one devoted to the Holy Scriptures, and one to the rituals and the Christian way of life. Book four contains part eight concerning the four kingdoms and the fifth and last kingdom of Antichrist, and part nine, an allegorical interpretation of the created world (20). If Lyubopytny is of interest for what he modifies in Old Believer modes of thought, Gnusin deserves attention for different reasons. He offers in fact the unique opportunity of contemplating in a coherent whole what in other writers is often left assumed, undeveloped, unarticulated. For these reasons, his Summa deserves to be dwelled upon at some length because, although it is not directly concerned with the question of marriage, it constitutes its obligatory background, it provides the necessary perspective for a proper understanding of what was at stake.

20 The structure of the Novye Pandekty is explained in Pandekta vtoraya, ff.31-34. See also F.Kruglov, 'Feodoseevshchina...' pp.606-607; Kruglov's description corresponds to what I have seen, except for the order of the nine parts. According to Kruglov, an ex-Theodosian who had left to join the Synodal church, together with the Kniga otecheskoe zaveshchanie the Pandekty were the most authoritative books among the Theodosians, who consulted them on all important matters; only very few were allowed direct vision of them. The reason given by Kruglov is that the Theodosian elders did not want married Theodosians to see the passages against marriage; in Kruglov's time, married Theodosians were trying to obtain the destruction of all works against marriage. The Pandekty had been bequeathed by a prominent Theodosian, Stukachev, to the Theodosian Kareev. They were passed over from Theodosian to Theodosian, until they ended in their present location.

The Pandekty open with a quotation from John Chrysostom borrowed from the preface to the Al'fa i Omega (21). An illumination portraying Christ holding an open book with the legend "I am the light of the world, who follows me will not wander in darkness" (22) is followed by an illumination portraying the Orthodox Faith of the East. She looks like a humble nun, clad in dark and modest veil, and holds in her hands the old eight-pointed Russian cross (23). An inscription below explains that this is the Holy Eastern Faith which, although unsolemn and modest in its appearances, and a simpleton when it comes to reasoning, not clever and of artless habits, is nevertheless honourable, worthy of respect and must not be betrayed (24); the Apostle Paul preached contempt of the wisdom and cunning of this world, love of the foolishness of the cross, meekness and humility, instead of cruelty, ferocity, pride and harshness. The Eastern faith is opposed to Latin cunning; Greek and Slavonic "grammatika" were to be studied instead of the "mendacious

21 Novye Pandekty, f.2v. The Al'fa i omega was printed by the Old Believers in Suprasl' in 1788. It is an encyclopaedia of old Russian literature: see Yu.A.Labyntsev, 'Pamyatniki', p.213.

22 See illustration n.4.

23 See illustration n.6.

24 Novye Pandekty, f.5v. Gnusin is quoting here from the unprinted book of Zakhariya Kopystensky (?-1627) (Kniga o pravdivoy edinosti pravoslavnykh khristian tserkvi vostochnoy, tam zhe i protiv apostatov i o ikh lzhevoy unii), a Southern Russian, who in 1616 he had arrived in Kiev and had entered the circle of Lavrenty Zizany, Pamva Berinda and Tarasy Zemka. In 1619, under the pseudonym of Azary, he published the Kniga o vere, against the Catholics, and in 1622 he published the Palinodiya also against the Latins, both of which enjoyed great popularity among the Old Believers.

dialectics which teaches how to confuse white with black, and black with white"; the books to study were therefore the "pious and righteous Chasoslov" (25) instead of the "cunningly devised syllogism and bombastic rhetoric", the "Psalter pleasing to God and used in the service" instead of "philosophy which makes men wander in the air of rational thought", the "Okto k'h mournful, meekly and wise" (26), and the "sermons of the Apostles and the Gospels expressed in simple interpretation, not in a clever one". The inscription under the illumination portraying the Eastern Faith concluded with a defiant cry: "We, foolish Rus', do not want the reason and the cunning of your heretical church and have no desire for your pagan sciences which pursue the glory of this world. We do not want to embrace your faith and we would rather appear foolish in your eyes and yet be saved according to the science of the Apostles and the traditions of the fathers" (27). If this was the thesis, a third illumination illustrated the antithesis, in the form of a richly adorned and loosely dressed crowned woman holding in her hands a parchment saying "O unhappy Apostolic times, when people of the first centuries were enveloped by a thick darkness! O, how great a pity they deserve

25 The Chasoslov was a popular book, and had many editions. For the Old Believers only the one printed in 1652 under patriarch Iosif (Zernova n.238) was Orthodox.

26 The Okto k'h was a liturgical book containing the text of the vespers, the night office, the matins, the sunday and weekly liturgies.

27 Novye Pandekty, f.5v. On the lack of interest in Russian Christianity in speculative theology, see G.A. Maloney, A history, p.15. Andrey Denisov too was opposed to the cunning of syllogisms and believed ignorance to be preferable to an intelligence capable of generating heresies - see his Pomorskie otvety, Moscow, 1911, f.46v. (answer 9) and 139v. (answer 29).

for their ignorance, since they observed strictly all words pronounced by God's lips for the attainment of salvation and eternal life. They thus trod a path full of hardships and toil, and were ignorant of these short and comfortable paths, which have finally been discovered by us" (28). The object of this sarcasm is self-evident. This woman who speaks in such mock-enlightenment language is the Faith of the West, of beautiful and marvellous appearance and clever reasoning. She is endowed with all the attributes to attract the lovers of the world, for she claims that "nowadays it is a thousand times easier to be saved than it was in the first centuries". But, as Gnusin warns, "Although she pretends to stand for the truth, she is like a young woman, of beautiful appearance, marvellous, cunning in her reasoning and wise. She is accustomed to dressing up grandly, and has all the means to attract to herself the thoughts of those who love the world, for she has abandoned the narrow path, the path of old, preferring to it the wide path of the new ... so that in front of God she is stupid and abominable ... accompanied as she is by pagans, Aristotelians and other wolfs and heretics" (29). Her followers belong to "that accursed school which finely grinds the sciences and which cannot teach any single one of her pupils to attain salvation, but only to become lovers of glory, proud and arrogant" (30). The attack on scholasticism was of course a staple ingredient of the polemic against the West.

28 See illustration 5.

29 Novye Pandekty, f.5v.

30 Ibid., ff. 7-8v.

"But let the reader rejoice in this God-inspired book, in these new Pandekty which we have compiled for the End of Times" begins Gnusin before revealing his name in some acrostic verse that follow (31). In them he gives a clue to the occasion which prompted him to the composition of so massive a work: as Antichrist was exerting his rule over this world, some merchants had made money, had been lured by Antichrist with the pleasures of this world and had fallen. Before, they were "gentle citizens", but now they no longer are: "And what goodness there was in you, it has disappeared in the twinkling of an eye; the goddess of Babylon has taken its place: she turned everyone dead as soon as she taught her Evil ... and now we too wander around like stranniki in the midst of accursed Babylon" (32). Gnusin concluded regretting the animosity of his opponents, those priestless Old Believers who used their rhetorical skills for a defence of marriage, in whom "theology had extinguished justice" (33). In the Predislovie chitatel'yu (Preface to the reader) of the Pandekty Gnusin laments the fate of humanity on the Last Days, dangerous for salvation and full of sorrows; he declares that he studied neither rhetoric nor philosophy, "but put all my

31 Ibid., f.9.

32 Ibid., f.17. This is probably a hint at the Preobrazhenskoe conflict of 1816 (see next chapter) as a result of which Gnusin had been denounced to the authorities by Osipov, a merchant who did not approve of the condemnation of marriage.

33 Ibid., f.17v.

hopes in God omnipotent, who has the power to make the non-wise wise (34). He recommends his work to the reader who wishes to hold his ground in disputes with "Jews and heretics of the Roman, Lutheran and Calvinist churches". After which Gnusin launches into an attack against the heretics which, although of a simple and popular style, is well developed, and shows a mastery of rhetoric and the ability to grip the imagination of the reader. The parable of the talents is employed to make the point that every Christian has the duty to learn how to acquire the necessary skills to defend the faith. Yet Christians must always found their arguments on the word of God, not on human reason. On the whole, Gnusin is a good writer; he can express his ideas with simplicity and strength. He is also an orderly writer. The introduction to the Pandekty is followed by a list of the works to which he has made reference (35). In all Gnusin lists 256 titles, in alphabetical order. The pages of this

34 Ibid., ff.19-24v. In Kartina porazheniya Gnusina, f.125v, Gnusin's pious ignorance is actually taken literally and made fun of. The author writes that in spite of not having studied the rules of "piitika" he was trying to be accepted as a "pravil'nyy stikhotvorets", in which he failed because he had a "vdokhnovlenie besovskoe" and could not therefore compose proper verse: "net poryadka razbora i soedineniya sloga... i tem yavilsya sam zdes' tol'ko rifmochan chto v sovesti i ume on strashno omrachen, i nray v nem chto zly, soboy izobrazhaet. Brodyaga, vne uma, sam o sebe yavlyayet".

35 Novye Pandekty, ff.25-30v. The title of the bibliography is the following: "Chislenie svyashchennykh knig i vneshnikh ot kotorykh nastayashchaya kniga Pandekty yako prekrasnymi i razlichnymi svyety lepotnoe urozhennaya svytoy sobornoy i apostol'skoy tserkvi yako venets vse goveyno podnesennaya": the compositional principle of the florilegium is clearly stated. Worthy of notice also that Gnusin openly states his inclusion of "vneshnie knigi".

bibliography actually are some of the most interesting of the Pandekty, revealing as they do the richness of the literature which was such a lively inspiration to Gnusin and the Old Believers, and which had so little in common with the literary trends of the time. This bibliography by itself can be regarded as substantial evidence of the vitality of Old Russian literature well into the nineteenth century (36). At the same time, this bibliography is an eloquent example of how Old Russian and Byzantine texts, the Orthodoxy of which was beyond any doubt, could be complemented with works of a later period, including some written by members of the Synodal church, hostile to the Old Believers. Some of these 256 titles deserve to be mentioned here at random in order to give a taste of the range of the different sources by which Gnusin purported to imbue with scholarly authority his most important work.

St. Augustine, many of whose works had been translated from the Latin in the eighteenth century (37) is followed in the list by O bradobritii, a writing in which the Moscow Patriarch Adrian protested against the forcible introduction of shaving by Peter the Great (38). Byzantine historiography is represented by Georgios Kedrenos (eleventh century) (39) and Georgios Pachymeros (1247-1310), the greatest Byzantine scholar of the thirteenth century

36 See V.V. Bush, 'Drevne-russkaya literaturnaya traditsiya'.

37 See SK, nn. 14-38.

38 In 1700 Patriarch Adrian composed an Okruzhnoe poslanie o borode against Peter's ukaz on the shaving of the beard. See G.A. Skvortsov, Patriarkh Adrian, pp. 316-320.

39 Georgios Kedrenos' Synopsis istoriōn was printed in Moscow in 1794 with the title Deyania tserkovnyye i grazhdanskiye (Sopikov, n. 273).

who wrote about the events of his time adorning them with theological quotations (40). For Russian history, annals, stories and legends there are the popular Povest' o belom klobuke, which extolled Russian piety against the Greek and was for this reason condemned at the council of 1667 (41), the Istoriya o Kazan'skoy vzyati, about Ivan IV's conquest of Kazan' in 1552 (42) the Khronika of Matvey Strykovsky (43), the Letopisets of Dmitry Rostovsky Tuptalo (1651-1709) (44), Arseny Sukhanov's Proskinitar, a book very popular among the Old Believers relating as it did the corruption of Orthodoxy among the Greeks (45), a Istoriya o unii (46), the Sinopsis of Innokenty Gizel (1600-1683), the first printed work on the history of Russia from the foundation of Kiev to the 1670s (47) a Featron (48) and a Istoriya svyashchennaya printed in St.

40 See G.Ostrogorsky, Geschichte, p.146.

41 The legend is attributed to Dmitry Tolmach and dates from the middle of the fourteenth century. See N.N.Rozov, 'Povest' o Novgorodskom belom klobuke'.

42 The proper title is Skazanie vkratse ot nachala tsarstva Kazanskogo ... i o vzyatii tsarstva Kazani, ezhe novo byst.

43 See A.I.Rogov, Russko-kul'turnye svyazi.

44 The Letopisets had been printed in Moscow, in Lopukhin's printing press, in 1784 (SK, n.1893) with a dedication to the metropolitan of Moscow Platon signed N.N., perhaps the initials of Novikov. In 1787, 1184 copies of this book were confiscated.

45 The Proskinitarii was an account of Arseny Sukhanov's second journey to the East in 1651-1653. See N.F.Kapterev, Kharakter otnosheni, pp.424-425.

46 Probably D. Bantysh-Kamensky's Istoricheskoe izvestie o voznikhshey v Pol'she Unii, first published in Moscow in 1805 after a Uniate mission had complained in the capital of the oppression on the Uniates by the Catholics in Poland.

47 The first edition was printed in 1714 (S.K., nn.2506-12).

48 This is presumably the Featron ili pozor npravouchitel'nyi Tsarey, Knyazey of Ioann Maksimovich, Arkhiepiskop Chernigovsky, published in Chernigov in 1708. It was divided in thirty chapters and was an encyclopaedia of various stories on Aristotle, Alexander the Great, Timur, Socrates, Nero, Tiberius and so on. See Budovnits, Slovar', p.351.

Petersburg in 1781 (49). Gnusin also included among his sources books about the history of the Old Believers' schism, the Pozysk o raskol'nicheskoy bryns koy vere written by Dmitry Rostovsky in 1709 (50) and the Polnoe istoricheskoe izvestie first published in 1794 by Andrey Ioannovich Zhuravlev, an Old Believer who had turned to the dominant church and had been ordained priest (51). Geography was represented by the Christian topography of Cosmas Indicopleustes (sixth century), a geographical and cosmographic encyclopaedia on the structure of the world which had been translated into Old Church Slavonic between the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (52). Monastic, religious and didactic texts abound; there are ascetic books such as John Climacus' Lestvitsa na nebo vozvodyashchaya (53), the Limonar, a Byzantine text composed under the supervision of John of

49 In 1781 in St. Petersburg was published a third impression of Johann Huebner's (1668-1731) Zweimalzwei und fuenfzig biblische Historien, with the title of Sto chetyre svyashchennye istorii Vetkhago i Novago zaveta, first published in Moscow in 1770 (SK, nn.1670-1674).

50 Of the same authors Gnusin lists Runo orushchennoe (Chernigov, 1683), the legend of a thaumaturgic icon of the Virgin Mary.

51 See SK, nn.2277-9. On Zhuravlev, see B.V. Titlinov, Gavriil Petrov, pp.916-919. On 17 July 1794 Petr Alekseev, protoierei of the Arkhangel'sky sobor in Moscow, wrote to Gavriil Petrov that all the copies of Zhuravlev's book had been bought by "starosta raskol'nicheskoy Il'ya Alekseev (Kovylin, P.G.P.) o kotorom ne s pokhvalom ob-yavleno v tom izvestii" with the aim of making it unavailable. See TSGADA, fond.18, no.314, f.1.

52 See Istoriya russkoy literatury, vol.1, p.205.

53 A Byzantine text first printed in Moscow in 1647, it had been reprinted in 1785 on Metropolitan Gavriil Petrov's initiative.

Damascus against the iconoclasts (54) and the Pchela (55); the Taktikon of Nikon of Montenegro, also known as Sinaksar; a eleventh-century collection of sixty three homilies (56); the Zertsalo dushezritel'noe and the Zertsalo mirouzritel'noe (57); the Zertsalo velikoe, a Jesuit collection translated into Russian in 1677 (58); the Zertsalo bogosloviya of Kirill Trankvillion Stavrovetsky (?-1646), (59), and by the same author, a Uniate theologian, the Evangelie uchitel'noe, a collection of homilies for the liturgical year (60). There are books on the white clergy: O dolzhnostyakh presviterov (61) and

54 The Limonar had first been printed in Kiev in 1628, had been reprinted in 1787 in the Old Believer Zhelezchnikov's printing press in Klinty, and in 1789 in the Old Believer press of Grodno, with the addition of an homely of encouragement for persecuted Old Believers.

55 A text of the Pchela with commentary can be found in Likhachev-Dmitrieva eds., Pamyatniki literatury, pp.486-519, 614-616. The full text of the Pchela, Drevnaya russkaya pchela, edited by V. Semilov, is in vol. LIV, n.4, of SORYaS.

56 It had been reprinted in Pochaev in 1795. See Budovnits, op.cit., p.338.

57 In a letter of 7 May 1821 to Ivan Mikhailovich Stukachev Gnusin explains that the Zertsalo mirozritel'noe is otherwise known as Dioptra, and its author is a certain philosopher Filipp, while the Zertsalo dushezritel'noe is a work of Maksim Grek.

58 See Budovnits, op.cit., p.37.

59 The first edition was printed in Pochaev in 1618. It had been reprinted in 1790. See Budovnits, op.cit., p.289.

60 Budovnits, op.cit., p.132.

61 Parfeny Sopkovsky and Georgy Konissky, O dolzhnostyakh presviterov prikhodskikh, St.Petersburg, 1776 (2nd edition 1789, 3rd ed. Moscow 1796). The pp.176-186 are on the sacrament of marriage: there are some ideas repeated also by Gnusin; namely that marriage is for reproduction, but not for the simple kind of reproduction which is common to beasts, but for one the aim of which is the glorification of God; after the Fall of Man, and the "rassvirepenie pokhotey plotskikh" marriage has become "vrachevstom predokhranitel'nyim ot bludodeyaniya" - but it is such only when celebrated in a canonical Christian fashion.

the Dialogism dukhovnyy, a book about the dignity of priesthood printed in Kiev in 1714 (62). Other books are the Shestodnev (63), the Leksikon slavenorossiyskiy of Pamva Berinda (64), the works of Maksim Grek (65), the Mechets dukhovnyy written in 1690 by Sofrony Likhudi (66), unspecified writings of Nil Sorsky (1433-1508), the leader of the non-possessors, the life of St. Nicholas (67), a not better identified Pitorika (68). It is with some surprise that one finds in this long list such works as Platonovo bogoslovie (69), the Skrizhal' (70) and Petr Alekseev's Tserkovnyy slovar'.

62 Gnusin actually writes Analogism, Kiev, 1714; but under that date, in Kiev, no such book was printed except for the Dialogism; Gnusin often distorts the titles of the books he quotes. See F. Titov, Tipografiya Kievsko-Pecheskoy lavry, p.436.

63 A Shestodnev was written in the 10th century by Ioann Ekzarkh Bol'garsky. See R.Aitzetmueller, Das Hexaemeron. The text is reproduced from a 1263 copy in ChOidr, 1879, vol.3. I.V. Budovnits lists other four Shestodnev (op.cit., p.370).

64 Budovnits, op.cit., p.150.

65 Gnusin does not specify which writings by Maksim Grek he has in mind. On Maksim Grek, see V.Ikonnikov, Maksim Grek; N.V. Sinitsyna, Maksim Grek v Rossii; and D.M.Bulanin, Perevody i poslaniya Maksima Greka.

66 See Budovnits, op.cit., p.167.

67 On the cult of St.Nicholas in Russia, see B.A. Uspensky, Filologicheski razyskaniya.

68 I.V. Budovnits (op.cit., p.279), lists six "Ritorika" - Gnusin could have been referring to those of Sofrony Likhud (1698) or Ioanniky Likhud', to the Ritorika A.Kh.Belobotskogo or to the Ritorika br. Andrey a i Semena Denisova which was based on Sofrony Likhud.'s Ritorika with notes and comments by the Denisov brothers.

69 This is Metropolitan of Moscow Platon Levshin's (1737-1812) Pravoslavnoe uchenie ili sokrashchennaya Khristianskaya bogosloviya St.Petersburg 1765.

70 See. n.127 chapter 5.

It is an impressive body of literature, especially if one considers the strenuous circumstances in which Gnusin composed at least part of his Pandekty, probably relying on his memory more than on the availability of books. It would indeed require a separate research to study the usage Gnusin made of his sources. This chapter will be limited to an attempt to explain Gnusin's ideas and the system of his thought. This is not the place for an analysis of the first book of the Pandekty. I will quote a passage only for the sake of giving an example of how Gnusin differs from Lyubopytny. The Pomoryan defined concepts in as rational and systematic a way as he could, and tried to make them understandable by means of examples and logical explanations. There is nothing of this kind in Gnusin, who instead of blending what he quotes in a rational construct, piles it in a compilation. This is how, for instance, he defines "dogma": "Regulation. Statute. Statutes. Tradition, which is an article of faith. Great dogma: the science of a statute. Dogma is a Greek word, the meaning of which in Slavonic is expressed in more than one word, but is summed up in one concept". Gnusin then proceeds to suggest the following translations in Russian: ustav, povelenie, ulozhenie, ukaz, zachinenie, predlozhenie, uzakonenie, utverzhdenie, suzhdenie, zavesh ha 'e, ustavlenie (71). Gnusin abstains from any classification and deliberately limits himself to a compilation of existing definitions as he has found them in the various authoritative books he has consulted. This is a

71 Novye Pandekty, f.12v.

syncretic approach par excellence. It could be argued that the different approaches of Gnusin and Lyubopytny manifest one more reverberation of the difference existing between a Byzantine florilegium and a Scholastic text, between Eastern Orthodoxy and Catholicism. Having shown one example of how Gnusin proceeds in his Pandekty, it will be clear why a study of his work, made up as it is of an endless number of quotations, could be a most strenuous and perhaps not immediately rewarding task. In a way, given Gnusin's methodology, it should be enough to know the texts he quotes and his purpose, namely the thesis he wants to reinforce to be able to guess with a certain degree of verisimilitude what his definition of any given article of the faith is going to be.

The second book contains, as we have seen, the fourth volume which is an extensive catalogue of all heresies, and volume five, which deals with the sacraments of the Christian church. This volume contains pages on the sixth sacrament, marriage, which are relevant to our inquiry (72). In these pages one finds an orderly exposition of the Theodosian conception of marriage, composed by piecing together quotations from the Fathers of the Church, prominent among them, St. John Chrysostom and St. Augustine.

As can be expected from a Theodosian who believed in the superiority of the monastic way of life, Gnusin begins his account with a nostalgic recollection of the state of humanity, i.e., of Adam and Eve, before the fall. Then man lived in a

72 See Novye Pandekty, book II, vol.4, ff.444-554.

state of harmonious and blissful innocence, in which there was no conflict between his will and the will of God: "man lived in Paradise, how he wanted, as long as he wanted what God had ordered; he lived rejoicing in God, blessed by him, lived without any shortage, and it was in his power always to live thus" ; Man could get what he needed without any effort, his body was incorruptible, he enjoyed perfect health and "between husband and wife there was a genuine bond of personal love and a close communion, physical and spiritual wellbeing, and it was easy to keep God's commandment". They had no cause for sorrow, they were free from sin and happy because untroubled by passions (73). This apathy was possible because God had not implanted an animal-like fury and lust in their souls (74).

By skillfully patching together different quotations Gnusin manages to conjure up an appealing, graceful and poetic description of man's state before the Fall. Angels rejoiced, the Evil one was tormented by envy; but man is endowed with free will (samovlastie) and there are four eternal cities: two of them, a human one and an angelic one, whose inhabitants are devoted to the implementation of God's will, and two others inhabited by man and angels of evil purposes who resist and oppose God's plan (75). All that Christians can do is pray to God, that He keeps

73 Novye Pandekty, f.445-v. Gnusin is quoting from St. Augustine's O Grade bozhien, book XIV, chapter 11 (printed in Moscow, 1786 - S.K. 16).

74 Ibid., f.447.

75 Ibid., f.447v; at the ff.447v-450 follow many more quotations on the subject of free will. The source of the idea of the four cities is, of course, St. Augustine.

their free will under his protection and prevents man from yielding to temptation (76). After the Fall, Adam and Eve felt they had become captives of sin, and covered themselves in vestments; it was at this moment that marriage was introduced among them, as clothing to fit mortals and slaves (smertnoe sie i rabskoe odeyanie) for an act which does not befit creaturees endowed with the gift of speech (77). For to live by the flesh is not praiseworthy; such a life is led not just by Christians, but also by heathen populations, not only by man, but also by beasts and cattle. Only the angelic way of life, i.e., the monastic one, can be considered glorious (78). Marriage is allowed not because it is a virtuous institution, but as a concession to human lust (pokhotlivost'), which leads to being born in dirt and darkness (skvernoe i temnoe rozhdenie). Marriage is not an expression of God's will, it is merely a concession to the sinful inclinations of man and to the perversion of his nature after the fall (79). It is the devil who induces women to

76 Ibid., f.449, Gnusin also gives some prayers to help keep free will under control.

77 Ibid., chapter 200: 'O porochnom i skotopodobnom po prestuplenii Adamove brake'. Gnusin refers here to the book of St. John Chrysostom On Virginity. To emphasise Gnusin's distance from the culture of printed books I quote a passage from the Svyashchennaya istoriya Vetkha, o i Novago Zaveta (St.Petersburg, 1778, p.7), a delightful retelling of sacred history in the spirit of the Enlightenment and of the populationist policies then pursued in Russia: "Po sozdaniu cheloveka promyshlyaya Bog o razmnozhении roda chelovecheskago sozdal zhenу, Adamu suprugu ... sotvoril emu zhenу imenem Evu, i sim pervyi zakonil brak".

78 Ibid., f.450v. The source here quoted by Gnusin is the Alfa i Omega (see n.21 here).

79 Ibid., chapter 226, f.499v. The main source quoted is the Inocheskiy potrebnik.

tempt men, with the argument that marriage is not shameful (80). But, in fact, with Adam the whole of creation has been contaminated and subjected to corruption; and both nature and man need therefore to be redeemed (81). How low is the consideration due to marriage can be seen even by reading the lives of the Patriarchs and the Bibles. They lived under the rule of marriage according to the law of nature, yet they observed chastity and like the just Noah lived until old age as a result of their late marriages and of having intercourse with their wives only in order to procreate. The latter was a clear intimation that the sins of the flesh bring the sinner to death. The just men of the Bible were pure and honourable, continent, and did not copulate like irrational cattle (82). The reference to Noah leads to the theme of the community of the Old Believers who, in the Last Days of Antichrist, are, like Noah in his ark, surrounded by the deep and muddied waters of sin; the ark is a true image of the City of God. While Antichrist excites the lusts of the flesh, the Christians, like Noah in the ark, must obey God's precept to lead a chaste life, while the impious giants drown in the tempest of

80 Ibid., f.452. Gnusin quotes an episode from the Life of Barlaam and Joasaph which he believed to have been written by John of Damascus: O zhitii tsarevicha Ioasafa. In this episode the woman who tries to seduce Ioasaf tells him that she has read in his Christian books that "Chesten brak ... luchshe zhenitsya nezhele zazhigat'sya..." (Paul, 1 Corinthians, VII,9).

81 Ibid., see ff.453v-454v, chapters 201-203.

82 Ibid., ff.455-v, chapter 204.

their carnal sins (83). Gnusin believes that chastity, while an obligatory precept during the Flood and in the Last Days, is at all times a superior way of life. While virginity is angelical, and superior to nature, marriage is according to nature, common to both men and beasts; Gnusin, in stating this, was fully in line with the traditions of the church which exalted the black clergy over the secular clergy, and was also diametrically opposed to Lyubopytny's justification of marriage based on arguments taken from the law of nature. Nature, for Gnusin, was not a book open to man for him to decipher in it God's designs, but something corrupted by sin and, since the Fall, subjected to Satan's domination; hence no teaching could be derived from its observation. After original sin nature itself has been perverted from the primeval purpose of creation. Moreover, in further indirect polemic with the Old Believers who were in favour of marriage, Gnusin pointed out that neither does virginity decrease the number of saved human beings, nor does a marriage contrary to the precepts of God increase their number. Quite the opposite, by an uncanonical marriage only sin and illegalities are multiplied (84). It is rather virginity, points out Gnusin, that multiplies humanity and increases the number of Christians in

83 Ibid., chapters 206 (ff.456-460v) and 207 (ff.460v-467r). For the giants (ispoliny) Gnusin quotes John Chrysostom's homily on Genesis (n.29), the homily n.33 of Maksim Grek, the Alfavit, the Letopisets of Dmitry Rostovsky, and St. Augustine who in the City of God explains that the sinners were defined "giants" because it was as if they had only body and no spirit at all (Book XV, chapter 23).

84 Ibid., see chapter 212, f.474v.

order to fill the ranks of the elected for Christ's Second Coming (85). To populationist arguments, characteristic of a time when governments were concerned to increase the physical numbers of their subjects regardless of their religious allegiances, Gnusin opposed a conception by which the only increase worth pursuing was the spiritual one of the saved, of those whose soul had achieved victory over the sinful body, because only they would truly populate the City of God. The others, who lived for the body, were destined to die in sin and were lost to the eternal city. Their coming into the world was irrelevant, unnecessary in a purely Christian perspective. To be born outside of legitimate marriage, argued Gnusin, was like being born not to life, but to sinful death (86). It is true, concedes Gnusin, that God ordered man to grow and multiply. But, had it not been for the transgression of our ancestors, men would have been able to reproduce themselves in a more decent manner (blagosooobraznyi vid) not like cattle do, but like angels (87). The faithful multiply themselves by observing the precept of God; cattle and infidels multiply by the body alone. Dirty and sinful is the City on Earth, but in the City of God, there will be neither

85 Ibid., chapter 213, ff.475-478.

86 Lyubopytny criticised this conception in Simvolicheskiy stateynik, f.256, in Iz knigi dvopolozhnika (Pavel Prussky edition) f.127v, and in O brake, ff.5v-6 where this idea is defined "satanicheskaya uvertka nyneshnago sueveriya" because it would be "kovarstvo" to think that God intends humanity to continue its existence by such devious means as the conversion of "nezakonno-rozhdennye".

87 Gnusin, Novye Pandekty, chapter 215, f.478v.

marriages nor bodily unions (88). The procreation of children is a thing of nature. It is of no use for salvation, and cannot therefore be adduced to justify marriage (89). The unfaithful idol-worshippers, those who say that, if there were no marriage, the human species would be exterminated, and towns and houses, the arts, the crafts and all the products of the earth would disappear, are the Devil's mouthpiece (90). Christians have a duty to fight with all their strength against the allurements of the flesh, because it is no justification that lust comes from nature. Those who transgress the precept of chastity are to be subjected to ecclesiastical punishment (91). Gnusin sees no validity either in the argument of those who claim that not the body, but the thoughts alone are sinful, and thoughts cannot be controlled (92). Gnusin does not accept this attempt to allow sinful behaviour. There were some who charged God with the accusation of unmercifulness for having abolished marriage in the Last Days, when Antichrist rules, yet leaving man still a prey to the gnawing of the flesh; Gnusin replied that this was a most unfounded and impious accusation; God has left baptism to the Christians of the Last Days, and thanks to the grace conferred by it men can struggle to fortify themselves and

88 Ibid., chapter 225, ff.498-499.

89 Ibid., chapter 227, ff.500-v.

90 Ibid., chapter 115, f.480.

91 Ibid., chapter 117, ff.483-v.

92 Ibid., chapter 218, f.484.

achieve salvation (93). In any case, Gnusin points out, marriage is more a source of sorrows than of joys (94), besides as chastity and virginity were in the beginning, so must they be in the end, before the Second Coming. This is required by the symmetry of the unfolding of the scroll of history (95). As we have seen in chapter II, there had been a debate between Andrey Denisov and Feodosy Vasil'ev concerning the canonicity of individually taken vows of chastity. Andrey Denisov had defended this practice, while Feodosy Vasil'ev had criticised it. Lyubopytny also had attacked the Theodosians for taking uncanonical monastic vows of chastity. Gnusin's view was quite different. He believed virginity to be the original vocation of humanity, the real state of nature, as it were, of nature before it was corrupted by sin. He quoted John of Damascus to the effect that "according to the Revelation in Paradise there was chastity". Adam and Eve led a virginal life in the Garden of Eden; hence virginity is obviously superior to marriage. God himself showed how virginity was superior by electing to be born from the womb of a Virgin. While virginity pertains to the angels, and is superior to corrupt nature, "marriage is according

93 Ibid., chapter 219, ff.486-489v. On Antichrist, see also S.S. Gnusin, O lavlenie na protolkovanie 105 slova svyatogo Efrema Sirina, and Letter to Ivan Mikhailovich Stukachev of 23 April 1821, in which Gnusin expresses his delight in reading Eph^h Syrian ("I imagined myself in a vast garden of exquisite beauty") and deplores that some Christians persist in not seeing that Antichrist is ruling, and continue to live "vo vsyakom plotougodii i sladostrastii" (f.176).

94 Novye Pandekty, chapter 228, f.501.

95 Ibid., chapter 221, f.492.

to nature", is natural and therefore sinful. Monastic literature is extensively quoted by Gnusin to prove that eunuchs are like the angels (96). As virginity was intended to be the general condition of humanity liberated from sin, there could not be any need for vows of chastity to be specially permitted by a bishop, as the Pomoryans claimed. Gnusin was, though unwillingly, prepared to recognize that there was a legitimate form of marriage, but he maintained that according to the Kormchaya and the Zonar only marriages consecrated by a priest were legitimate (97). According to him the examples of marriages celebrated outside the Church before Christ's incarnation had no significance for Christians. They are only allowed to enter into unions blessed by Christ, celebrated in such a way as to symbolize the union of the church with its bridegroom Christ (98). Rules formulated by pagans and heretics can have no influence on Christians (99).

Gnusin dismisses as vain the insinuations of those writers in favour of marriage, equates the Theodosians with the heretics who, in the Last Days, will deny marriage. For Theodosians do

96 Ibid., chapter 208, ff.467v-470v.

97 Ibid., chapter 231, ff.503v-506v. In chapter 237, ff.518-520 Gnusin argues that already before the dispositions of Emperor Alexis Comnenos legitimate marriages had to be celebrated in churches.

98 Ibid., chapter 234, f.514, and chapter 235, f.514-v.

99 Ibid., chapters 247, f.530, chapter 248, ff.530v-531v, in which Gnusin states that divine benediction only extends to Christian marriages, and chapter 249, f.532, in which he quotes from an article 'O raznykh isvestiyakh' in the Pribavlenie k zhurnalu Pusskiy, Invalid, 1814,n.3,p.30.

not deny legitimate marriage, they only object to unlawful ones, such as those unions which, because of the end of the Church under the rule of Antichrist, cannot be celebrated by priests (100).

The third book of the Novye Pandekty provides the reader with basic religious and ethical notions. Its first part, volume six of the whole work, offers general precepts and advice on how to read the Holy Scriptures. Gnusin quotes Iosif of Volokolamsk to the effect that to approach the reading of sacred books Christians must first purge their soul from all worldly passions (101). Only after such a purification will the meaning of God's words become transparent to the soul. This elitist approach to the Scriptures is contrasted to that of Martin Luther, in Gnusin's eyes the heretic who turned the Scripture into material for a mass reading by anyone, without any discrimination between the virtuous and those whose vision was obscured by sin and the lust of the flesh. By so doing Luther had chosen the easy and wide way instead of the narrow path of salvation (102). Still arguing

100 Ibid., chapter 260, f.554v. Here Gnusin accuses his opponents of attacking monasticism as Martin Luther and Calvin did. Gnusin also quotes an Istoriya Unii printed in Moscow in 1805 (see n.46,ivi), in which, at p.70, is given further example of Christians who in time of persecution succumb to the demand of the flesh.

101 Novye Pandekty, book 3, vol.6, chapter 1, f.2v. Gnusin quotes from the 8th homily of the Prosvetitel' of Iosif of Volokolamsk.

102 Ibid., chapter 4, f.5v. The criticism of Martin Luther is taken from the Kirillova Kniga.

against Lutheranism Gnusin stresses that the traditions of the Fathers are not less relevant for a Christian than the Gospels. This last was a point extremely dear to the piety of the Old Believers (103). Humility was the spiritual attitude necessary in the approach to the Scriptures. In them everything had to be considered with great attention and straightforward devotion, down to the very last letter, lest by some superficially minor alteration one should fall into heresy (104).

Gnusin follows this with a list of all just men and martyrs, from Biblical times up to Old Believer martyrs, a genealogy of all the emperors, or "Tsars", starting from Julius Ceasar and ending with Emperor Constantine, and a chronology of Russian Princes and Tsars, from Pyurik up to Alexander I (105). The seventh part contained in Book Three comprises a series of precepts: how Christians must dress, where they must wash, and in whose company, with whom they can share meals and prayers. Ultimately the model is the one set by the monastic way of life, including the rules concerning the relationships between the sexes (106). It would be vain to attempt to sum up the fourth book; while its first section (volume eight) is a compilation of Apocalyptic literature, its second section (volume nine) is an allegorical exposition of the whole of creation, of speaking and non-speaking creatures, of sensible and insensible matter, animated and inanimated. It is organized like an encyclopaedia, ranging from

103 Ibid., f.112.

104 Loc.cit. This point is made in chapter 9, f.25.

105 Ibid., ff.92-127.

106 Ibid., vol. seven, ff.128-311; most of the precepts are taken from Nikon of Montenegro, the Formchaya, and the Nomokanon. such headings as riches to virtues, from stars to indolence, from

the crescent to midnight, covering the sky, weapons, clouds, trees, silver, treasures, the millenium and the seasons, youth and old age (107). It could be fruitfully studied in the context of a research in popular medieval encyclopaedias. For the present purposes it will suffice to take notice not only of the persistence of such compilations in popular culture - which is a well known fact - but also that the genre was still being produced, and that it was considered an integral part of the Old Believers' world view. One is left to wonder whether Gnusin can be considered the last to attempt the compilation of an Encyclopaedia of these proportions in the medieval and Byzantine tradition.

Gnusin also composed a work of more strictly polemical nature on marriage, called Predlogi i vozrazheniya (Propositions and refutations). This can be considered his main work against the novozheny, and it is of particular interest because here Gnusin directly challenged Lyubopytny's ideas. The work was completed in 1805. It begins with a dedication to the leader of the Moscow Preobrazhenskoe community, Il'ya Alekseevich Kovylin, dated 31 August 1805 (108). The Predislovie (Preface) is dedicated to "any reader of whatever rank, or age" as long as he be "pious, orthodox and devout". In the Predislovie, Lyubopytny is portrayed as the most dangerous opponent of the Theodosians, who were obviously worried by the ideas he was disseminating since,

107 Novye Pandekty, Book Four. On this type of encyclopaedism of which the most famous specimen is Pliny's Naturalis historia, see G.B. Conte, 'L'inventario del mondo'.

108 Predlogi i vozrazheniya, ff.1-2v.

as Gnusin states, they asked him to compose such a lengthy refutation of them. Gnusin quotes nine works by Lyubopytny, probably most of what he had written at that early stage of his career (109). He begins his refutation by inviting Christians to rely on God alone and not on the "external secular sciences" (110), as Lyubopytny was fond of doing. The novozheny are by him defined a "sophistic and hellenic assemblage, crooked in more than one way"; and their marriages are nothing but "blasphemy" to God and the canons of the church (111). He attacks Lyubopytny's arguments for being "mortal systems, based on weak foundations, on the shadow of truth, shameful baseness". He rejects Lyubopytny's thesis that exterior actions do not affect the substance of sacraments, and Lyubopytny appears to him to be a "wolf in sheep's clothing" for insinuating that "it is not the substance of the thing or its sacramental characters which needs the religious ceremony, but the cunning of politics and abundance of means" (112). He thunders against Lyubopytny: "The devil has really done a good job mangling you, that you say such terrible and foul things about the holy prayers, about the crowns, and the marriage ceremony" (113).

Gnusin comments on Lyubopytny's idea that the ceremony of marriage is only an external adjunct, an "attribute" [prinadlezhnost'], in this way: "hear this, worthy readers, what

109 See chapter 5.

110 Predlogi i vozrazheniya, f.19.

111 Ibid., f.22v.

112 Ibid., f.23.

113 Ibid., f.25v.

his marriage is like, and judge for yourself: because without piety man is the worst of all animals, worse even than the devil, and, according to what we can read in all holy books, is deprived of any share in God's inheritance" (114). Gnusin is convinced that Christians follow his teachings and marry because they are "imprisoned by lust" and by doing so they place upon themselves the mark of the beast. After this introduction to his Predlogy i vozrazheniya, Gnusin embarks upon the confutation of Pomoryan doctrines which he has ordered in a number of different propositions. The confutation is carefully and intelligently planned. Gnusin answers the criticism of his Pomoryan opponents who were protesting against the Theodosians lack of charity towards the weaknesses and needs of human nature and the excessive weight of the burden imposed upon Christians by the universal prescription of virginity (115). The Pomoryans were arguing that a virginity observed out of compulsion could not be considered virtuous, neither could it be considered in accordance with the freedom of human will accorded by God to Man (116). The Pomoryans also raised the more practical point that women were extremely useful for the carrying out of domestic chores, especially in the households of merchants and traders (117). In reply Gnusin reproduces some of the arguments already examined in the Novye Pandekty and develops some of them. He firmly denies

114 Ibid., f.39.

115 Ibid., f.66.

116 Ibid., ff.293, 321.

117 Ibid., ff.252,258.

the claim of the novozheny that in the Book of Genesis God gave his blessing to marriage. The blessing to "be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth" (Gen.I.28) did not bless every human being in the fullness and exclusivity of his human substance (sushchestvitel'nyy obrazom); God's exhortation to be fruitful and multiply could not be considered a blessing and a legitimization of marriage. In a strange reading of the passage of the Book of Genesis, Gnusin argues that the blessing concerns "not only dumb animals, but also all insensitive plants, and the earth itself"; therefore the blessing concerns the material world in general, and has no bearing on marriage in a Christian sense. That blessing also justified heathen unions, which were not sanctified by the church and did not pertain to its jurisdiction (118). If natural marriage, as blessed in the Book of Genesis, was enough before Christ's work of redemption, since then the precept to "be fruitful and multiply" has acquired a new meaning, it has been transfigured into an exhortation to "be fruitful and multiply" not in a material sense, according to the Old Man of the Old Testament, but in the spiritual way in which souls achieve their salvation. As for marriage, though there are arguments in favour of it, they have been devised exclusively for the consolation of those who are not capable of achieving the high standard of chaste virginity: these Christians must not be discouraged by denying them the opportunity to pursue a virtuous life inside marriage, when legitimate marriage is

118 Ibid., f.93v.

possible (119). Gnusin's conception is thoroughly permeated by the awareness of the dramatic turnabouts of Sacred History. He rejects the arguments of those novozheny who take their examples from the Old Testament and stresses instead the revolution brought about by the incarnation of Christ. The New Man is the result of the redemption operated by Christ - thanks to it man and nature have been offered an opportunity to be purified. Hence human marriage has radically altered its nature and has become qualitatively different from the unions practised by the rest of the created world, and from the marriages practised by all those who have remained without and opposed to Christianity. In other words, Gnusin believes that the incarnation of Christ has led to a polarization between nature and paganism on the one hand, and Christianity on the other: "every bodily union because of Adam's transgression is believed to be, was and is considered foul, and distinguished in no way from the rest of creation. But because man, created in the likeness and image of God, has been therefore created for eternal life, he must greatly distinguish himself not only from dumb animals, but also from all pagan and heretical peoples in his marriage and reproduction" (120). Gnusin recognises solely the Christian law, the only one to be "perfect, true and conducive to salvation" - pagan laws are valid only if incorporated into Christian law (po sile prisvoeniya); but pagan laws as such are completely ineffectual. As for marriage laws, Gnusin quotes from the lives of the saints

119 Ibid., ff.115v-136.

120 Ibid., ff.138-139.

many examples of heathen marriages which had been considered ineffectual so as to enable those saints to choose the monastic way of life; whereas a Christian marriage cannot be dissolved. "And here the natural law of marriage is debased once and for all ...while the law of the church does not admit separations" (121). Pagan laws cannot therefore be quoted. Christians must endeavour to stress their distance from both nature and non-Christian humanity, and pursue their similarity to the image of God. Marriage can only be conceived as a metaphor of the union between Christ and the Church. Gnusin regards only this form of marriage as being permissible to Christians, and he finds unseemly the analogy propounded by the "throng of the novozheny", who suggests that the substance of marriage is common both to Christian marriages and to pagan and heretic ones, and to the beastly copulations of any living thing which moves and crawls upon the earth. Only Christian marriage can lead to salvation:

"through the visible sign of the holy sacraments we receive extreme bliss, God's grace, and fill that angelic place in heaven; because the riches of God's grace are abundant and not scarce, and have heavenly substance, so that they have the power to lead to salvation, while at the same time they remain the thing itself and its end. But you, with the substance of your unheard of and blasphemous marriage, as is revealed in your crooked hellenic syllogistic apology, debase all that in dirt, thus ending up with the accursed heretics" (122).

The incarnation of Christ had marked the first important

121 Ibid., ff.121v-132.

122 Ibid., ff.142v, 159v.

historical caesura, dividing up historical time into the period from Adam's fall until the redemption of Adam, and after this redemption onwards. The advent of Antichrist in 1666 had marked the beginning of the third of the great historical aeons (123). After the incarnation of Christ, the advent of Antichrist was the other dramatic change which revolutionized the rules of Christian behaviour. The Orthodox could no longer live in a free order, but had to follow the narrow path of necessity in order not to be deprived of salvation. Marriage no longer existed in this second Christian aeon, and the priestless Christians were expecting the Second Coming of Christ at any moment.

In Antichrist's time the number of sacraments had been reduced to two, baptism and penance, as it had already been decreed at the Novgorod council of 1694. Penance remained the only sacrament available to assist those Christians who surrendered to the wiles of Antichrist: they could no longer find a blessing in marriage, but only forgiveness and penance for their sins (124). Gnusin is extremely indignant against those novozheny who adduce need (nuzhda) as an argument. He quotes the Song of Solomon, which supposedly is an allegory of the love between Christ and his bride the Church; before such divine love, to speak of human needs is most despicable "adulteration" (125). He articulates his refutation of the argument from need in five points.

Firstly from a Christian point of view, i.e., for the sake of

123 Ibid., ff.200-226v.

124 Loc.cit.

125 Ibid., f.44v.

salvation, only two sacraments are indispensable, baptism and penance, which in fact can be performed by laymen. To the novozheny who claim that, as new prayers and liturgies have been created from time to time, there is no reason why new definitions of sacraments should not be created, Gnusin objects that between prayers and sacraments there is a very substantial difference: "it is totally out of place to compare the sacraments of the church with other rituals, it is like comparing a Tsar to his servant". Gnusin observes that there are many differences in rituals and customs among many ecumenical churches without these differences resulting in "divisions and disgrace; but when it comes to the sacraments, as soon as some dissension arises, it is immediately put right and those who do not submit are condemned as heretics".

Secondly, sacraments, explains Gnusin, are founded on the two dogmas of the Trinity and of the Incarnation; it is through the sacraments that the adoption (usynovlenie) of the Christians by God takes place. The heretics are those who transgress against the sacraments; Gnusin compares those who want to celebrate marriages outside the liturgy to Zwinglians and Calvinists, who turn the Sacraments into "vacuous simulacra" (126).

Thirdly, Gnusin is bewildered and outraged by the argument that there could be contradiction between the Law of the Church and the Law of God. He takes the traditional line that those who obey the church obey God - of course, in the absence of a living church authority, what Gnusin means when he says that the

126 Ibid., ff.43v-50.

"pastors of the church hold the laws of the church, and he who listens to them, listens to God" is that Christians must heed the rules of the church as they were formulated before the schism. Gnusin's stance is diametrically opposed to Lyubopytny's, who had fostered the view that the creativity of the church had not been extinguished, and there could still be found pastors, albeit not in the ranks of the "visible church". For Gnusin, what pastors the Christian Church had, were all in the past. There was no living authority to refer to. Hence for Gnusin the novozheny who believed that marriages can be celebrated outside the church are like animals. To Gnusin, the thesis of the novozheny that "it is better to transgress a law of the church than a law of God" is pure infidel folly. The one cannot be transgressed without at the same time transgressing the other (127).

Fourthly, Gnusin denies to the transgressors of the law of the Church the hope of being saved: "since all the laws of nature, and even more so the Ten Commandments have indeed been written by God's finger, nevertheless it is not proper for a Christian to act according to them against the law of the Gospel. By the same token, the laws of the Gospel must not be observed in opposition to what the Church has said and ordered". He totally rejects the whole concept of natural theology and natural law, which in fact had been crucial to the argument of his opponents. He also rejects the possibility of achieving salvation by the Gospel alone, and with words which remind one of Dostoevsky's Grand Inquisitor, concludes that "much that has been done or said by

127 Ibid., ff.52-55v.

Christ does not suit us and is not proper for us to do or say". Again, the "nulla salus extra aecclesiae" of St. Cyprian (128).

Fifthly and finally, the examples taken from the Old Testament are not relevant also for another reason. The Old Testament is full of situations which could not possibly be taken as a model by Christians: marriages among brother and sister, polygamy, concubinage, men who take up a fourth or even a fifth wife, men who put away their legitimate wives, marriages which were not legitimately celebrated, fathers who gave their daughters in marriage to infidels. Therefore, concludes Gnusin, these "random ancient examples" cannot by any means be relevant to the present times (129). In consideration of the radical change brought about in the human condition by the advent of Antichrist, namely a nature which is now corrupted beyond any possibility of redemption and the increased vulnerability of man before Sin, Gnusin is all the more outraged by the novozheny's insistence on human free will. If not kept under strict control, free will can lead to evil deeds and to perdition. The novozheny had reservations about compulsory virginity also on the grounds that abolishing as it did free choice, it would result in the destruction of "human free will given by God to man"; they were sceptical that a virginity offered by ordinary Christians only under compulsion and imposition, could please God as much as a virginity offered by the Saints "from their own good zeal", as a fully given gift.

128 Ibid., ff.55v-63.

129 Ibid., ff. 63-94.

Gnusin replies with sarcasm: "we marvel very much at this wise men, what has come into their heads, that they mention free will?". What Gnusin believes in is rather the discipline of the Domostroy, to which he refers the novozheny. Experience, points out Gnusin has shown how little free will is to be trusted and valued; it leads to the fall of Adam: "you can say that unrestrained free will leads astray from good to evil; one who acts according to free will moves away from God, and from the angels turns to the devils and to Satan". Therefore Christians pray God that "He make our will obedient to His will, so that our will shall not be opposed to His in anything". Whereas the novozheny are zealous for the devil; "they do not consider the will of the Church, but display a satanical contempt and pride". In what seems an allusion to his fiend Lyubopytny, Gnusin states that everybody ought to submit to the church, instead of "being curious" [lyubopytstvovati]. In an apostrophe to him, he writes: "But you, novozhen, you are not zealous, you are negligent because of your evil arbitrariness and earthly thoughts you seek free will, and move away from Christian submission ... like an unbridled horse you want to be tied only by the natural law of free will" (130). With their insistence on free will the novozheny are disobeying Christ and the Church. They sin out of "natural pride" (131). Gnusin had observed the law of nature only in "dumb animals"; when followed

130 Ibid., ff.321-336v. Ivan IV was equally hostile to free will: see N.A. Kazakova, Ya.S.Lur'e, Antifeodal'nye ereticheskie, p.175.

131 Ibid., f.237.

by humans, especially of little understanding (malye cheloveki) it only leads to disgrace (bezobrasie). He is firmly convinced that natural law only makes Christians revert to the sinful and fallen Old Man and turns them into animals (132). Nature and listening to the promptings of free will can only result in blasphemous thoughts. The novozheny in fact suggested that a Tsar who would force his subjects to bring him presents above their means or against their desire would be called a tyrant and had argued that such a rule would be considered "improper" for an earthly Tsar. How was it then that such a despotic and tyrannical rule is attributed by the Theodosians to God in relation to "His creatures endowed with reason and will?" (133). Gnusin faced with this idea bursts out in a series of invectives: "you throng of fornicators... where did you find such foul and blasphemous dogma?" How dare the novozheny, exclaims Gnusin, slander Christ and accuse him of being "an extortioner and a tyrant" for not having freed man from the nuisance of lust once marriages were no longer legitimate? "What could be worse than this evil slander?". Gnusin has never before come across such virulent heresy. But then, he concludes, it is written in the Book of Revelation that Antichrist would have lips capable of "great acts of blasphemy": and there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies (Rev.XIII,5) (134). To the church of Gnusin the novozheny were opposing a "legitimate natural marriage" blessed by God seen as "natural father". The novozheny, in Gnusin's quotation, held the following belief:

132 Ibid., ff.34v-35.

133 Ibid., ff.352v-353.

134 Ibid., ff.353-362v.

"We ... feel in ourselves His extremely great mercy, we know that we have been endowed by Him with will and reason, see in ourselves the law of nature implanted by Him, and believe that it will be with human nature until the day of the Final Judgement of our Lord. We feel in ourselves lust implanted in us by him, believe that there is and will be a legitimate marriage for the propagation of the human species, and as a defence against fornication, until the day of the Final Judgement of God. We believe that if we shall preserve the form and the matter of legitimate natural marriage, it will be blessed through by our natural father the heavenly patriarch" (135).

Gnusin's reply is a long indignant ejaculation: the novozheny in his view are the very false prophets of the Last Days, who under the disguise of marriage are actually preaching fornication. Their "scandalous marriage" is "fornication" because "outside the visible and material signs, God's grace cannot be received" (136). Against these arguments of the novozheny Gnusin points out that the act of submission to the church is free, and implies a recognition of the laws of the Christian Church, a desertion of natural law, a marking oneself off from irrational creatures. While natural law has its jurisdiction over creation, in Christian man its manifestation only entails a loss of the image of God in man, namely a "bezobrazie", a being swept away from piety by the natural instincts (137). When they subscribe to the Church and accept its authority Christians must also give up "the turbulent syllogistic and sophistic hellenic sciences" and

135 Ibid., ff.3³-364v.

136 Ibid., ff.3⁴v-401.

137 Ibid., f.34.

adopt a mental habit of Christian simplicity and intellectual humility (138). Gnusin refutes another proposition of Lyubopytny's in which it is suggested that the most enlightened Old Believers ought to promote love and peace, instead of conflicts and disputations, something which is becoming ever more their responsibility in front of their coreligionists; the leaders should gather "out of love of God and their neighbours", reach unanimity and in joint council examine the Scriptures and there contemplate the "riches of true reason", judge impartially "what is useful and what is harmful for everybody in particular and all in general" (139). Gnusin's answer was that the love of God and obedience to his commandments must come before any other consideration; the novozheny have "sharp tongues", but they should remember that no good can be done by those who disobey; love and peace are commendable and good, but only when they are in accordance with the law. He strongly objects to the concept of "general utility": "you are trying to introduce what you like and is pleasing to you, not what is according to the right law". Gnusin stresses the abyss separating things sacred from things mundane: "you insist on having a mundane approach towards these dispositions, while they are as far away from one another, like heaven from earth". The preNikonian dispositions of the Fathers must not be abandoned, because the Old Believers are, in the Last Days, "the last remnant of piety" against the "carnal

138 Ibid., ff.139-142.

139 Ibid., ff.168v-169.

theories" (140). Obedience was the most important Christian virtue. Gnusin invited the wavering ones to "quiet submission and sincere repentance" and against individualistic conceptions of "utility" he exhorted to "collective virtues"; only those virtues could lead the soul to the achievement of the only useful end, namely salvation in the afterworld. He compares the novozheny who are not capable of sustaining the burden of obedience to the laws of the Church to Ham, who in the Ark had his wife: "Ham was the only one who during the universal flood did not want to observe God's commandment, he found it heavy to bear, and transgressed it" (141). Gnusin also objected to the marriages of the novozheny because in his view they did not allow for order and control in the degrees of kinship. If there are so many possible ways of marriage, argues Gnusin, how can one be sure that by one particular form some law has not been transgressed? There could be marriages in which the bride has been kidnapped, or marriages in which the will of the parents has not been respected, or else marriages which do not take into account the witness of the people; if only the substance matters, the variety of forms can originate an endless series of conflicts, disorders and transgressions, such as incest or disrespect of the fact that one or both of the spouses is a minor. Great confusion would ensue (142). While

140 Ibid., ff.169v-175v.

141 Ibid., ff.255v-257.

142 Ibid., ff.125, and 10-11.

in the universal, encyclopaedic scope of the Novye Pandekty there is not room for observations of a strictly temporal and worldly character, in this polemical work Gnusin allows for glimpses of coeval Old Believer life, which make for quite rewarding reading. To the novozheny, who lament the hardships of having to keep up merchant households without female assistance, Gnusin objects that it is allowed to people who married before conversion to continue their conjugal cohabitation, albeit under the observance of the strictest chastity. What the novozheny therefore shamefully dare to complain about is nothing to do with the keeping of the household, but the precept of mortifying the flesh. Gnusin brings many examples of holy couples who cohabitated in chastity (143). He claims that even in the Theodosian merchant households many strangers happen to live together under the same roof, busy in various activities of a manufacturing kind, but they live together without any scandal, having in mind only the carrying out of their activity. Gnusin writes that most of these people are serfs, whose masters hate the Christian Old Believer faith and would like to force Christians, especially the women, to marry and produce offspring for them. To escape these landlords, continues Gnusin, they go into hiding in the cities, "in merchant houses and workshops" and pay great sums of money in order to be given a passport. The exclusive motivation of these people, writes Gnusin, is to be able to live in circumstances favourable to the observance of the Christian faith, of virginal chastity. These people, explains Gnusin, pay hundreds of rubles "just for the sake of chastity. 143 Ibid., ff.258-270.

And having paid for it, they wander like orphans where God leads them". Gnusin depicts the predicament of these people who have nowhere to stay except monasteries and hermitages; "Where could they live?". These people, he points out, could do as the novozheny preach, but then they would find themselves deprived for ever of access to the church which has offered them shelter and protection from their landlords. They are not in a position to accept the "illegal disposition" of the novozheny, which can only be accepted by "a total despiser of Christ, law, or by an unreasonable and simple barbarian" (144).

A dark reality seems to transpire through Gnusin's words: that of people who having left the countryside and having tied themselves to rich patrons, find themselves completely dependent on their good will and forced by necessity to observe, or pretend to observe, the strictest Theodosian rules in order not to incur in the wrath of their patrons. The strange thing about this whole situation is that Gnusin seems to find it perfectly acceptable, so much so that he adduces this as an argument against the novozheny. In his mind, so geared to notions of authority and obedience, of human wickedness and inability to pursue in freedom the path of salvation, the notion of a life of chastity observed not by inner desire but by outer constriction, does not seem to inspire considerations about the ensuing degradation of human dignity. In this respect, Gnusin's ideas are more alien to the modern reader than those of Lyubopytny's. To adopt the ideas of the novozheny would entail ruinous consequences for those

144 Ibid., ff.271-272v.

Theodosians who have found a shelter at Preobrazhenskoe: it is the devil who is conspiring by means of "external syllogistic arguments" in order to take possession of those in whom "the flesh lusts against the spirit"; whereas "monastic beauty" demands that unseemly thoughts be fought against. The novozheny argue that those who sin in thoughts are not less guilty than those who sin in actions. In this argument Gnusin sees devilish pride, capable of leading to despair rather than to correction; the purpose of the novozheny in saying this is to close the "hopeful way of repentance". Chastity and virginity will be rewarded, concludes Gnusin, because from evil thoughts one can be freed through the sacrament of penance (145).

Gnusin's writings can be viewed as a vast dam against the attack waged on Theodosian orthodoxy by Lyubopytny and other like minded Old Believers. Like Joseph de Maistre, he stands in the nineteenth century like some gigantic relic from the Middle Ages, and like the Savoyard, he hated reason for its corrosive effects on tradition (146). What may have made less effective this dam, is the limited access to Gnusin's writings; the big folio volumes reached the Theodosians only through the mediation of the elders, the ones who were allowed to read them. Gnusin was an esoteric writer. Unlike the exoteric Lyubopytny, he did not believe in wide discussion and circulation of ideas. Gnusin relied on the authority of the sobor, while Lyubopytny relied on the force of

145 Ibid., ff.272v-287.

146 For a moving admission of the doubts generated in an Old Believer by the rationalistic critic of religion of the Enlightenment, see Ivan Vasil'ev, Izveshchenie razglogol'stviya. Benedetto Croce (La storia, p.61), called de Maistre "odiatore della ragione".

persuasion of his ideas. This different approach accounts for their different attitude to each other's writings. In his Istoricheskii slovar', Lyubopytny did not mention one single work of Gnusin's, thus giving the impression that the Theodosian was indeed the ignorant fanatic he had described (147). Instead Gnusin, in his Predlogi i vozrazheniya, acknowledges Lyubopytny's writings, quotes extensively and, as far as it is given to judge, scrupulously, and even does him an unintentional service by quoting some of his works which would otherwise have remained lost. It would seem therefore that Gnusin is more fair to his opponent than Lyubopytny. But in fact the reason for this apparent lack of fair play is that Lyubopytny wrote works which he hoped would be greatly circulated, while Gnusin wrote for a very limited number of people, to the exclusion of others. Lyubopytny was motivated by the need to propagate his ideas at the cost of not doing justice to his opponent. Gnusin could afford to be more honest because he had no need to worry that, if correctly quoted, the ideas of his opponent would have influenced the Theodosian flock. On the other hand, Kovylin, who saw eye to eye with Gnusin, is known to have encouraged the destruction of his opponents' writings to stop the dissemination of their ideas (148). The truths collected by Gnusin were not going to be cast before swine. Lyubopytny, on the other hand, was caught in the dilemma of the divulgator, of the demagogue or of the ideologue who believes himself entitled to a distortion of an opponent's ideas for the sake of the cause.

147 Lyubopytny, Istoricheskii slovar', p.142.

148 I.A. Kovylin, Razsmotrenie, p.86.

Chapter 7

The Secret Committee on the Old Believers

During Alexander's reign there took place at Preobrazhenskoe a conflict which had the unfortunate result of making it the object of unwelcome attention on the part of the government. Aleksey Nikiforov, a Theodosian merchant had amassed a fortune with the help of Kovylin, who had allowed him to make unlimited use of capital belonging to Preobrazhenskoe. After Kovylin's death Nikiforov decided to push forward his proposals for a more orderly administration of the society's finances. His proposals were passed unanimously (1). After 1812 Nikiforov's proposals were slowly put aside, and the old practice of leaving all property uncontrolled in the hands of the nastoyatel' was restored. In 1816 four wardens who had been greatly respected in Preobrazhenskoe died, at a short distance from one another. Efin Grachev (1743-1810), old and weak and left alone as warden, proposed the election of three new wardens: Ivan Mikhailov Stukachev, Ivan Fedorov Mekhovshchik and Dmitry Timofeev Goncharov. Most Theodosians, including Gnusin, were in favour of this choice. But there was a group, led by the merchant Lavrenty Ivanov Osipov, that put forward a request that the expenses of the community be calculated and that it be made clear who the creditors were; in addition Osipov proposed other candidates instead of Grachev' S (2).

1 Sinitsyn, Istoriya Preobrazhenskogo kladbishcha, p.35. On Aleksey Nikiforov as popechi el', see N. Popov, Materialy, p.67, and TsGIA, fond.834, op.2, no.1666, Fakty kazayushchaya raskola, f.93v.

2 Sinitsyn, op.cit., pp.36-39.

On this occasion Nikiforov did not welcome the proposal to bring order into the administration of the economy, because he had built his factories with loans from Preobrazhenskoe; if he were asked to return the money, he would lose his fortune. He therefore opposed Osipov's motion and the choice of his candidates as wardens (3). Knowing that the candidates proposed by Osipov were rich and influential merchants for whom it would have been inconvenient to live in Preobrazhenskoe, Grachev's party used the devious means of insisting that the office of warden be conditional on a continuous presence in the community and availability for matters of common interest.

Osipov was offended by the lack of trust in his candidates; ill will was rapidly bringing relations between the two parties to a head. More than once Gnusin, who supported Grachev, was interrupted and challenged during the celebration of common prayers (4). What is interesting about this conflict is that both parties saw fit to ask for the intervention of the state to settle the dispute, and took the unprecedented step of petitioning the Moscow guberniya board (gubernskoe pravlenie).

Only Antip Andreev, the nastoyatel' of the cemetery, opposed the submission of petitions to secular authority on the grounds that

3 Ibid., p.40. On Preobrazhenskoe as an institution offering credit, see Borovoy, Kredit i banki v Rossii, p.236.

4 Sinitsyn, op.cit., p.40.

it transgressed Article 21 of the 1751 Polish rules, which forbade "Christians to submit to the arbitration of a tribunal of another faith". In a gesture of protest he left Preobrazhenskoe (5). Grachev's petition to the gubernskoe pravlenie was drafted in such a way as to turn the conflict from a purely financial and administrative disagreement into a dispute involving the question of marriage. In this way state officials were inevitably put on the alert, and began to consider possible demographic consequences which a spread of Theodosian doctrine could have on the population of Russia (6). Grachev explained in his petition that Osipov had no right to interfere in the administration of the Preobrazhenskoe cemetery, because he was a "novozhen", i.e., he had a sinful relationship with the "lecherous woman", Golichaninova - which was not allowed by the rules of the society.

On receiving the petition the Governor General of Moscow Count Alexander Petrovich Tormasov ordered the litigants to be brought together and to reconcile them. The attempt failed. The quarrelling parties then sent their representatives to St.Petersburg to petition the Minister of Internal Affairs O.P.Kozodavlev directly. The result was a victory for Grachev's party (7). Enraged by the outcome on 31 July 1816, Osipov denounced to the Moscow gubernskoe pravlenie the presence in the cemetery of "fugitive and badly intentioned people, and of Gnusin

5 Ibid., p.41.

6 On the government's concern to increase the number of its inhabitants, see Bartlett, Human Capital.

7 Sinitsyn, op.cit., pp.41-42.

among them, who had escaped from Osokin's foundries, and spread corruption, prohibiting marriages and speaking of the Tsar as of the snake of the Apocalypse" (8). Osipov accused Gnusin of deserting Kovylin's teachings on the question of marriage, and decried these "vagabonds" who had succeeded in winning over the old and influential Efim Grachev. The petitioners took pains to point out that Gnusin and those who supported him should rightly "fear the prosecution of the law, for marriages are the root of the well-being and of the population of the fatherland". Osipov appealed to "common sense" and requested help from the authorities so that Preobrazhenskoe could have as administrators "worthy people, loyal to the government, endowed with reason, able to carry out faultlessly their civil obligations and renowned to the whole capital city [Moscow] for their honourability (9).

8 Ibid., p.42. See also TsGIA, fond.834, op.2, no.1666, denunciation of Ivan Ivanov, 15 February 1820, f.94.

9 TsGIA, fond.1473, op.15, no.1. Pros'ba protiv nastoyateley v Moskve Preobrazhenskogo doma, 31 July 1816, ff. 246-251. See also Poslanie odnogo staroobryadtsa protiv novovvoditeley vrednykh pravil v staruyu veru (TsGIA, fond.1473, op.15, no.1, ff.232-245) in which it was declared that the real issue of the disagreement was the question of marriage, and that it was better to have "heretical marriage", although sinful, rather than have wives under the guise of cooks and maids, and kill the children born from secret relationships. The latter must have caused concern to the authorities. See also TsGIA, fond.1284, op.195, no.3, Po ukazu..., f.46: a report on Gnusin claiming that he made stricter rules on marriage after Kovylin's death, and TsGIA fond.1473, op.1, no.290: Prichina nesoglasii raskol'nikov Preobrazhenskogo Bogodel'nogo Doma, ff. 18-20, in which under the influence of Osipov's denunciation, the Theodosians are compared to the Jesuits for their threat to Orthodoxy and peace inside the family.

With this insidious denunciation which referred to the Theodosian theory of the incarnation of Antichrist in each successive ruler, Gnusin was being tripped up on the slippery ground of lese-majesty. Such a serious denunciation against those who after all should have been regarded as coreligionists, testifies to the alarm with which influential merchants viewed the diffusion of extremist doctrines against marriage (10). Osipov's denunciation triggered an unforeseen chain of events. To begin with, it had fatal consequences for Gnusin and for his close associate, Ivan Fedotov Tarovity. The latter was a Moscow meshchanin, one of the wardens of the Preobrazhenskoe community and in Lyubopytny's words a "terrible brakoborets". Born in 1771, he had been Kovylin's loyal supporter, though his opponents were more inclined to see in him Kovylin's "evil instigator" (11). Both Gnusin and Tarovity, having learnt of Osipov's denunciation of 1816, went into hiding. Gnusin went at first to Kolomna, then to Sudislavl' in the Kostroma guberniya, where he was offered shelter by a merchant, a certain Nikolay Andreev Pashulin. Ivan Fedotov Tarovity took refuge in the guberniya of Yaroslavl' (12). Investigations in 1819 about Gnusin and Ivan Fedotov Tarovity were not conducted openly. The police team, lead by F.N. Glinka, a subordinate of the Military Governor of St.Petersburg, General

10 See TsGIA, fond.1284, op.195, no.3, f.46, Po ukazu Prav. Senata o nesoglasiiakh proishedshchikh mezhdru staroobryadcheskimi obshchestvom pri Moskovskom Preobrazhenskom Bogodelennom dome, vo vremya vyborov popechiteley, 9 February 1819.

11 See Lyubopytny, Istoricheskii slovar', and TsGIA, fond.834, op.2, no. 1666, police report, 15 February 1820, f.93v.

12 Sinitsyn, op.cit., p.43.

M.A.Miloradovich, pretended to be enquiring about a warden of the Volkovo community, an ex-Lutheran called Egor Fuks, displaying concern that he should not use his position to propagate the Lutheran faith (13). At the time of the investigation Ivan Fedotov Tarovity was in St.Petersburg, where he was preaching Gnusin's ideas against marriage. One of the wardens of the Volkovo community, a certain Ivan Ivanov, was tempted by this coincidence to make use of the arm of the state against his doctrinal opponents. In November 1819 Ivan Ivanov reported to Glinka that Ivan Fedotov Tarovity was in St. Petersburg, and gave information leading to his arrest (14). Ivanov's long testimony is of interest in that it shows a certain degree of convergence between the ideals propagated by the government and by official culture and the opponents of the most inflexible theories about marriage. This Old Believer informer intended in his "little letter" to fulfill what he had promised on 12-13 November 1819 "in front of our God, Creator of All" (15); he assured the recipient of his denunciation of his "openheartedness and frank sincerity... for you gained my

13 TsGIA, fond.1473, op.14, no.1, Zapiska o Feodosievskom sekte voobshche, ff.186v-194; Zapiska o nachalnike Volkovskogo kladbishcha Egora Fukse, ff.200-202; and Zapiska osobo o Volkovskom kladbishche, ff.196-198. For the text of Fuks' interrogation: TsGIA, fond.1473, op.16, no.1, 21 November 1819, ff.287-291, and the deposition of the Theodosian Luka Slavyaninov about Fuks, 12 November 1819, ff. 314-18.

14 TsGIA, fond.1473, op.16, no.1, Ivan Ivanov, Report of 15 November 1819, ff. 276-288.

15 It is not clear to whom the promise to inform on the Old Believers had been made: in TsGIA, fond.1473, op.16, no.1, the report of 23 November 1819, f.279v, is addressed to a "grafskoe siyatel'stvo".

sincerity not by means of tortures or tyranny, but it was my own inclination which led me to that". Ivanov was honestly concerned with the success of an inquiry which was in the interest of the "common Good" and demanded that he be defended from the "bites of the dogs" who might attack him if the secret of his collaboration should be disclosed. He denounced the Theodosians with acrimony for being against prayers for the authorities. In one of his several denunciations he recalled how the Old Believers had been wondering how to answer possible police inquiries on the question of the prayers for the authorities (16), and in a third denunciation of 23 November 1819 he exhorted the police not to be taken in by the cunning and evasive answers of the St. Petersburg Theodosians (17), who claimed that they recited prayers for the authorities. Ivan disclosed that there had been discussions in Preobrazhenskoe in 1812, "when the universal enemy and scourge of all Europe, the French, had galloped over the Russian frontier and the inhabitants of the cemetery had been required to pray to God for victory". Then all the members of the society had taken council together to decide whether or not to obey, that is,

16 See TsGIA, fond.1473, op.16, no.1, report of 15 November 1819, f.278: Ivanov reports that in the evening of 13 November 1819 the Volkovo Old Believers had been wondering what to do if in connection with the inquiry on Fuks, they had been asked if they prayed for the authorities. Some suggested "skazhem molim"; in case they were asked if they called the Sovereign "blagochestivyi" or not, there was the danger of either betraying their faith, or becoming the victims of oppression. After much deliberation it was decided to take out Andrey Denisov's Pomorskie otvety and show in reply the flattering adjectives used in reference to Peter I, yet avoiding the use of the word "blagochestivyi". On the question of the prayers, see Guryanova, 'Staroobryadcheskie' - and 'Staroobryadcheskie ... v fedoseevskom soglasii'.

17 TsGIA, fond.1473, op.16, no.1, report of 23 November 1819, f.279.

whether to provoke the anger of the Sovereign by a refusal, or risk an act of apostasy from the faith. As they asserted, "for us it is all the same, whether we have the sovereign, or whether we have a Napalion (sic!), for neither of them is of the Orthodox faith, and on both sides an Antichristian army is fighting, and in their blood rejoices the very devil Satan"; for this reason the Preobrazhenskoe Old Believers had decided to pray and accomplish hundred prostrations in the morning and hundred in the evening "for our own sake so that God should free us Orthodox Christians from all misfortunes; and if the policemen should ask us if we pray to God for the victory, then we shall answer that we pray morning and evening with hundred prostrations" (18). Ivan Ivanov was determined to persuade the police of the danger inherent in the views of his opponents at the Volkovo cemetery, and decided to invest in the use of Pugachev's name. He explained that Pugachev's proclamations had been communicated to all Theodosian communities in Russia, and that they had sent the Kazan merchant Ivan Tikhonov who had been a follower of Pugachev, to St. Petersburg from Moscow (19). Ivanov also denounced the prohibition of marriage, and tried to explain in his own words what such a prohibition entailed.

"Say I am a son of the Greek Orthodox Church, and I come of age, and have a legitimate wife. Now, if I were taught the schismatic faith, and if I agreed to go over to them, then in accordance with their custom they would baptize me again as if I were an infant, and on the

18 Ibid., f.279. For a discussion of the behaviour of the Moscow Theodosians, and a dismissal of accusations of the kind levelled by Ivanov, see V. Druzhinin, 'O prebyvanii frantsuzov'.

19 On Pugachev and the Old Believers see Kadson, 'Vosstanie Pugacheva', and 'Tserkov' - aktivnyi uchastnik'.

eighth day after baptism they would change my name; then the old man [starik] who had baptized me would teach me that because I have known the Orthodox faith and I have been sanctified by holy baptism, then it is proper that I should live in purity, and no longer have carnal intercourse with my wife. After this I would promise to him "Honoured Father, I shall fulfill all your prescriptions". Imagine now that after a while I become weakened in my good intention and because of the natural lust fall into that transgression; if my wife does not become pregnant, even if for all the rest of my life I have dealings with her, I will nevertheless remain forever right and innocent in front of my coreligionists. But if after such a fall my wife gives birth to an infant, then I have to repent to my spiritual father, ask for his forgiveness of my sin, and then our elder will order me to make seven prostrations in front of all the congregation and bow in front of everyone who happens to be in the church and ask forgiveness from everyone. After which the elder will impose as a penance, an excommunication of six weeks as a result of which I will not be able to pray, eat or drink with my other coreligionists and I will be allowed only to stand behind a window and watch the others while they pray".

The penalty for sinning, continued Ivanov, would be six months for the second birth, one year for the third, three years for the fourth and six years for a fifth child (20). Ivanov also tried to explain the way an Old Believer reasons.

"Let's say, for example, that I have a son or a daughter, who as infants have been baptized by a muzhik, and let's say my son has come of age, say he's twenty years old, usually at this age nature inclines to marriage, then my son tells me "batyushka, I have to marry, the time has come". And I say to him: "My child, we live now in the Last Days of Antichrist, there no longer are marriages, and there no longer is a priesthood to celebrate marriages, and you try to resist that tempest, and for that you will receive retribution from God, and if you cannot resist, you had better sin with ten women, rather than marry. On this suggestion my son chooses any woman, who is willing not to marry, and then he falls in such dishonourable vices, but if he

20 TsGIA, fond.1473, op.16, no.1, Ivan Ivanov, report of 23 November 1819, ff.280-v.

is sensible and has no wish to busy himself with dishonourable vices, then he asks me to marry him, and I agree to his request and I marry him, but in that case my superior [nastavnik] will torment me as if I had handed over my son to Antichrist, right in his teeth, and will hold me to be in great sin, will excommunicate me for six years, and I will not be allowed to eat, drink and pray with the others, and in all chapels I will have to go and make seven prostrations and bow in front of everyone who happens to be in the chapel, and they will make me fast. After six years, I will be taken back in the society".

Ivanov went on to explain how difficult it was for those who had many children who wanted to be married. They ended up being excluded from the society of their coreligionists for all their lives. Besides, the married son of a novozhen would not be forgiven for all the length of his life, unless he agreed to part from his wife. But if he did not agree to separate from his wife then he would be forced to live "like beasts forgotten in their imbecility" (21).

In a report of 27 November 1819 to Glinka, Ivanov denounced Gnusin, Ivan Fedotov Tarovity and Ivan Tikhonov of Kazan' as the main causes of discord in Moscow, and Gnusin in particular as the author of "corrupted books with illustrations", a reference, perhaps, to his Novye Pandekty which are in fact illuminated (22). Meanwhile Alexander had been kept informed about the inquiries conducted on the Theodosians and was worried about the nature of their doctrines. In July 1820 he wrote from Tsarskoe Selo to the Military Governor of Moscow, at the time General Prince Dmitry Vladimirovich Golitsyn, expressing his concern: "the improvement

21 Loc.cit.

22 TsGIA, fond.1473, op.16, no.1, Ivan Ivanov, report of 27 November 1819, f.340.

of the state has always been the object of my special care... having attention to it, I let myself be guided by rules of meekness and leniency in all cases whenever this was possible without weakening the strength of the laws". These principles had been followed also in relation to the schismatics, as long as the erring ones did not trespass the limits placed upon them and did not upset order and tranquillity. For that reason Preobrazhenskoe had been allowed to acquire the status of a House of Charity. But, "to our great surprise", continued Alexander, "we have found out that this society, abandoning the rules of quietness [pravila tishiny], had been the cause of many disagreements in the choice of the wardens, and that complaints addressed to the authorities have revealed that in Preobrazhenskoe there are hidden many "suspicious people" such as, for instance, "Sergey Cnusin, who on various occasions has taken up different names and professions ... pretends to have been freed by manumission by different landowners, defends harmful rules, such as disobedience to the authorities and to the law, the corrupt nature of marriages and such". "Having examined all the circumstances of this case", Alexander judged that things had taken a turn against the rules adopted by the government in such cases. "When we allowed the establishment of Preobrazhenskoe as a House of Charity, we did not expect that from this would have derived controversies on the nature of heresy in which the courts would become involved, or that it would have become necessary to include the councils of the Old Believers in the legal competence of the guberniya and police authorities". Alexander was of the opinion that the Moscow

authorities should no longer busy themselves with the internal disagreements of the Old Believers, and that the authorities should only concern themselves with the "strong prosecution" of all police and criminal transgressions. He concluded his letter to D.V.Golitsyn prescribing that: no one was to concern himself with the internal matters of Preobrazhenskoe, because the Old Believers were to sort out their quarrels themselves; in case of complaints, they were to be dealt with as complaints expressed privately by a private citizen, not by a society; all efforts were to be used in order to capture Gnusin. The whole matter was to be entrusted to Kochubey, in his capacity of Minister of Internal Affairs, concluded Alexander (23). The Tsar appeared to favour a policy of religious tolerance in harmony with the education he had received and believed he was following a policy of non-interference of the state in religious matters. The order to arrest Gnusin was seen by him as nothing but the prosecution of a man whose doctrines encouraged criminal transgressions on the part of his followers.

In October 1821, after months of search, Gnusin was finally identified and discovered in his hide-out. The Military Governor of Moscow D.V. Golitsyn wrote on 28 October 1821 to Kochubey that since August 1818 Gnusin had left Moscow and taken refuge in the guberniya of Kostroma and after many failed attempts he had been

23 TsGIA, fond 1284, op.195, no.3, Alexander I, instructions to the Moscow Military Governor, Prince D.V.Golitsyn and to Kochubey, both of 3 July 1820, ff. 25-27.
found in the house of the merchant Vasil'ev under a false name

(24). Kochubey ordered the arrest of Gnusin (25), who had meanwhile changed his hide-out, all the while keeping in touch with his coreligionists whom he continued to advise on controversial matters (26). In December 1821, Gnusin was finally arrested by the police in the house of a Sudislav merchant, a certain Papulin. Some time later, Ivan Fedotov Tarovity, Gnusin's coreligionist, was also found and on 6 October 1822. Kochubey ordered his arrest (27). Gnusin was taken to Moscow where, in January 1822, he was interrogated by the governor, D.V.Golitsyn. Golitsyn soon realised that a public formal inquiry would not result in the establishment of the truth because of "the fanaticism and continuous care with which these schismatics hide everything which concerns them" (28).

24 TsGIA, fond 1284, op.195, no.3. D.V. Golitsyn, report of 28 October 1821, ff. 36-37.

25 TsGIA, fond 1284, op.195, no.3, order of Kochubey of 16 November 1821, f.38.

26 Nikanor, 'Gnusin', p.402.

27 TsGIA, fond 1284, op.195, no.3, report to Kochubey of the Kostroma Civil Governor, ff. 39-40, and order of Kochubey to D.V. Golitsyn, ff. 51-52. See also Sinitsyn, op.cit, p.51. On Papulin: Titov, 'Dnevnyye dozornye', 1836, I, p.144.

28 TsGIA, fond 1284, op.195, no.3, D.V.Golitsyn, report to Kochubey of 26 July 1822, ff. 41-44.

In order to understand, Golitsyn had made use of "two notes, a book and two drawings by Gnusin, which fully show what sort of a person Gnusin is, what his doctrine is and what its foundations are", as he wrote to Kochubey, to whom Golitsyn pointed out that "all the doctrines of Preobrazhenskoe are founded on the inveterate belief that only those images are holy, which are executed according to the old usage". Moreover, he wrote, they believe that "since Nikon's time there no longer is a priesthood... and that therefore there no longer are marriages, so that they reject everything". Such doctrines, observed Golitsyn, turn them into fanatics who look exclusively to their books to confirm their doctrines. Nevertheless, it seemed to Golitsyn that as far as Gnusin was concerned, "nothing special had been discovered except that, in accordance with his doctrine, he allowed himself to compose drawings offensive to religion, which, in spite of all searches, it has not been possible to find, and about which we only have the witness of the faction hostile to him" (29). Golitsyn was of the opinion that "there was no evident transgression on the basis of which he, in consideration of the Charitable Leniency of the Sovereign Emperor to the mistakes of these people, should be condemned in accordance with the laws"; nevertheless he believed that "it was necessary to send him away from Moscow because, on account of his severe rules and modest way of life, he is considered by many of

29 Ibid., f.42. On the drawings, see Nikanor, op.cit., p.401 and on Osipov denunciation of them see Sinitsyn, op.cit., p.43.

his followers to be a saint. If Gnusin and Tarovity were sent away, the Preobrazhenskoe Old Believers would be deprived of the main propounders of the new (sic!) doctrines which without their support would lose their strength". Other measures proposed by D.V.Golitsyn were the institution in Preobrazhenskoe of registers of births (metricheskie knigi), and banning the reception of foundlings completely, although "there were reasons to fear that such a prohibition would result in the murder of infants because the Old Believers are ready to do anything as long as they do not allow their soul to become heretical" (30). Consequently, on 27 October 1822, Kochubey issued more detailed instructions to D.V. Golitsyn in which he recommended that the "secret prisoners" (sekretnye arestanty) be kept apart from each other and locked in different cells in Schluesselburg, and that the Old Believers be prevented from finding out where they were lest they tried to free them (31). Later, in April 1823, Kochubey gave orders that both Gnusin and Tarovity be transferred to the prison in the monastery of Solovki (32). On 25 May 1823 the Governor of Arkhangelsk informed Kochubey that on the eighteenth of the same month he had received Gnusin and Tarovity whom had been sent to Solovki under the escort of an officer and two gendarmes (33). But the precautions taken in order not to betray the whereabouts

30 TsGIA, fond 1284, op.195, no.3, D.V. Golitsyn, cit. f.42v.

31 TsGIA, fond 1284, op.195, no.3, instruction of Kochubey to D.V. Golitsyn, 27 October 1822, ff. 53-54. For plans to liberate Gnusin see TsGIA, fond 834, op.2, no.1666, Report of Ivan Ivanov of 12 December 1819, ff. 66-90v, and fond 1473, op.12, no.1, Zhurnal Komiteta of 22 September 1822, ff. 150v-151v.

32 TsGIA, fond 1234, op.195, no.3, ff.102-107, 164. See also fond 1473 op.24, n.1, report of Arkhimandrit Makary of the Solovetsky Monastery to D.V. Golitsyn of 21 January 1823, f.644.

33 TsGIA, fond 1284, op.195, no.3, f.107.

of Gnusin and Fedotov failed; on 15 May 1823 the Theodosian nastavnik Zinovy Osipov recognised Gnusin and Tarovity while they were crossing the Volga at Yaroslavl'. Osipov communicated the news to his coreligionists and the place of imprisonment became known among all Theodosians (34). Solovki had commercial links with Preobrazhenskoe; these links enabled Theodosians to ease the lot of Gnusin and Tarovity during their imprisonment by sending them money and provisions, and also by visiting them (35). Gnusin remained in Solovki for sixteen years, and after a brief illness he died there on 27 June 1839; he was buried by a Theodosian merchant, called Terlin, leader of a community in the guberniya of Arkhangelsk (36). The Theodosians never forgot that Gnusin had been arrested and imprisoned because of the "slander of the lovers of illegitimate marriage" (37). After Gnusin's death, Terlin asked the archimandrite of the Solovki monastery, Makary, to give him all the drawings and manuscripts produced by Gnusin during his imprisonment and before. Eventually the Moscow Theodosians asked Terlin's sister, Anna Fedorovna, who lived in Preobrazhenskoe, to help them to secure copies of Gnusin's works (38).

The second important consequence of Osipov's denunciation was the

34 Sinitsyn (op.cit., p.52) gives the erroneous date of 1824 instead of 1823.

35 Nikanor, op.cit., p.403.

36 A.Titov, op.cit., pp.144-145.

37 See S.S.Gnusin, Ispovedanie pravoslavnykh khristian, f.lv, Otvet na klevetu Rozhkova Gavрила Semenova, f.26, and the Theodosian Ustav quoted by Nikanor, op.cit., p.402.

38 Nikanor, op.cit., p.403.

setting up in 1820 of a Secret Committee on the Old Believers, which lasted until 1858. As the mediation of the Moscow gubernskoe pravlenie had failed to conciliate the contending parties, the dispute was eventually submitted to the Senate (39) which in its turn considered that a judicial case concerning the Moscow Old Believers should belong to the competence of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Popular Enlightenment. Alexander I had set up eight ministries in 1802 as "saving instruments" intended to promote the well-being of the peoples of Russia (40). In 1817 the competence of the Holy Synod was reduced when the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Popular Education was extended to religious matters, and it was renamed Ministry of Religious Affairs and Popular Education, or "Ministry of Obscurantism", as Karamzin quipped (41). The newly created dual ministry was headed by Prince A.N.Golitsyn. Initially an agnostic, Golitsyn had taken to religion after his appointment as chief procurator of the Holy Synod in 1803 (42). He soon developed an interest in mysticism and in 1812 he opened a chapel in his own house for private worship, where the Russian Bible Society was founded in 1813 (43). Golitsyn acted as its secretary, and as head of the dual ministry he found himself in a

39 See TsGIA, fond 1473, op.20, no.1, V.P. Kochubey, Zapiska; the date when the matter was passed to the Senate is not mentioned.

40 PSZ, vol XXVII, n.20406, 8 September 1802.

41 PSZ, vol XXXIV, n.27106, 24 October 1817. On the ministry see I.A.Chistovich, Rukovodyashchie deyateli, pp.172-188 and I. Smolitsch, Geschichte, p.273 ff. On Karamzin's quip, see N.K. Shilder, Imperator Aleksandr Pervyy, vol IV, p.11.

42 See F.V. Blagovidov, Ober-prokurory, pp.347-391. On Golitsyn, see W.W. Sawatsky, "Prince Alexander N. Golitsyn".

43 On the Bible Society, see J. Cohen Zacek, The Russian Bible Society; A.N. Pypin Religioznyya dvizheniya, pp.4-293.

position to impose his mystical conception of an internal church, interdenominational and rising above the division of the different external churches, thus diminishing the supremacy hitherto enjoyed by the Orthodox church (44). Golitsyn had been collecting reports from the diocesan bishops on the Old Believers since 1816 (45). However he was of the view that

"the best thing is to ignore them as much as possible. If the government were to take notice of them, this could only happen in two ways: either they are persecuted, and then, woe! they would be considered like martyrs and attract even more followers to their erroneous doctrines; or the legislation could exempt them from all control of the dominant church. In this case they would believe that their mistakes have the sanction of the government. When it comes to the schismatics, we can only hope in the grace of God, the times and the efforts of judicious churchmen" (46).

In Golitsyn's ministry it was discovered that, contrary to belief, the Preobrazhenskoe Old Believers did not belong to the edinoverie branch of the Orthodox Church, which would have brought them under the jurisdiction of the Ministry; Golitsyn therefore referred the matter back to the Senate (47). After

44 I.A.Chistovich, op.cit., pp.157, 191-201; and F.F. Vigel', Zapiski, pp.116-118 and 65.

45 TsGIA, fond 1473, op.25, no.1, Golitsyn's instructions to the bishops of 4 December 1816, ff.648-653; op.26, no.1, the reports of the Bishops, ff.654-689; and fond 834, op.2, no.1666, Fakty kasayushchiya raskola, 11 April 1819, ff. 54-59.

46 This is recollected by Peter von Goetze, a Baltic German who worked under Golitsyn in the Department of Religious Affairs: see his Fuerst Alexander Nikolajewitsch Golitzin, p.64.

47 TsGIA, fond 1473, op.20, no.1, Zapiska of V.P. Kochubey of 27 May 1820, f. 467.

this refusal of Golitsyn's the Senate decided to consult Count S.K.Vyazmitinov (1749-1819), head of the Ministry of Police which had been created in 1811 (48). Vyazmitinov made a report to the Minister of Internal Affairs on 19 February 1819 in which he said that in his view only those who had originally established the Preobrazhenskoe charitable house and its benefactors were entitled to participate in the election of the wardens. The elections were to be conducted by balloting in front of the Moscow Chief of Police and possible conflicts were to be sorted out by the Moscow Governor General; being a charitable institution, Preobrazhenskoe would also be expected to keep registers of its residents and submit them to the police. As for the circumstances of Gnusin's hiding, which had been revealed by Osipov in his denunciation, they were to be investigated and Gnusin himself was to be tried; otherwise, the police would not interfere in matters pertaining to ritual and internal organization (49). The Ministry of Internal Affairs was headed at the time by Prince Viktor Pavlovich Kochubey (50), a cautious functionary with European manners, ambitious and "homme comode"

48 In 1806, the Old Believers had been put under the jurisdiction of the second department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (see PSZ, vol. XXIX, no.22102, 20 April 1806); but they were moved in 1811 to the second department of the Ministry of Police, the Executive, at its second table, which dealt with criminal affairs. (PSZ, vol XXX, no.24687, 25 June 1811).

49 TsGIA, fond 1473, op.20, no.1. Zapiska of V.P. Kochubey, 27 May 1820, ff. 467v-468.

50 On Kochubey and the Ministry of Internal Affairs see N. Varadinov, Istoriya Ministerstva, vol 1-3; N.D. Chechulin, Knyaz' Viktor Pavlovich Kochubey; P.K. Grimsted, The Foreign Ministers, pp.80-91, and, on the ministry, D.T.Orlovsky, The limits of Reform, pp.21-26.

who never swam against the current (51). Kochubey had also played an instrumental role in the setting up of the Bible Society in Pussia, particularly in ensuring its success and approval by the Emperor (52). His conduct on the question of the Old Believers seems to confirm the view that his interest in religious policies was greater than generally assumed. Kochubey was not pleased with Vyazmitinov's report, and felt that he could not approve of a resolution which seemed to him in disagreement with three principles which, he believed, inspired government policy towards the Old Believers. These principles were: toleration of conscience, opinion and internal worship; prohibition of rituals which disclosed a clear deviation from the church and piety; surveillance of the police over the actions of the schismatics in society, including putting an end to any proselytising and diffusion of corrupting doctrines among the Orthodox (53). Kochubey assumed that when in 1809 Alexander had granted to Preobrazhenskoe the status of a charitable house, the reasoning behind his act had been the following: "I allow the institution of a House of Charity to such people whom I tolerate, because all charitable activity is in itself good, but I cannot and must not enter into any judgement, nor must I try to sort out schismatic affairs, because in whosoever's favour I should

51 See AKV, XXX, p.264, 'Tolki i nastroyenie umov v Rossii' pp.670; V.I.Semevsky, Politicheskaya, p.69 and the perceptive remarks of E.E.Roach, 'Alexander I and the Unofficial Committee', pp.138-139.

52 J.Cohen Zacek (op.cit., pp.38-43) points out that Kochubey's role had been overlooked even by such historians as A.N.Pypin (op.cit., p.27).

53 TsGIA, fond 1473, op.8, no.1, Zhurnal Komiteta of 27 May 1820, f.107v.

judge, I would act unjustly on account of their false foundations" (54). To Kochubey therefore it seemed most inappropriate that Grachev's request for intervention over the dispute in the Preobrazhenskoe community over the election of the wardens should have been brought to the attention of the judicial instances, and that local authorities should have been allowed to have a say in the affairs of the schismatics. He felt that "the government knows of the existence of their society, but does not acknowledge it". If Old Believer disputes were solved in the courts, there would arise "a risk of confusing spiritual and civil matters" (55). Kochubey believed that only matters concerning schismatics in their quality of private citizens ought to be examined in the courts, because there was no such thing as a schismatic society with a judicially recognized existence (56). On this basis Kochubey came to the conclusion that in case of conflict, the Old Believers should sort out their differences among themselves although it was necessary that the police should quietly (neglasno) keep itself informed of the proceedings of internal meetings (57). Grachev, with his petition and the succession of events started by it, unwittingly allowed the government a glimpse of its abysmal ignorance about the Old Believers. Until then, attitudes towards them had been resting

54 TsGIA, fond 1473, op.2v, no.1, Zapiska of V.P. Kochubey, cit, f.470.

55 Ibid., f.471.

56 Ibid., f.471v. These are Kochubey's words: "...ibo obshchestvo raskol'nicheskoe pred Sudom byt' ne mozhet. Chtob ono byt' moglo, nadobno: chtob ono politicheskoe ili grazhdanskoe suchshestvovanie imelo, a ni to, ni drugoe ne dopushcheno".

57 TsGIA, fond 1473, op.8, no.1, Zhurnal Komiteta of 27 May 1820, f.108v.

on the few general notions acquired through an "enlightened" education which portrayed them as superstitious but fundamentally harmless folk who could be absorbed within the structures of an enlightened empire by means of a conciliatory policy of toleration which would supposedly in time blunt the sharper edges of their fanaticism. Now an alarm bell resounded in the ears of the hypersensitized members of a government responsible to a sovereign who was once described as the first sectarian of Russia. Kochubey admitted openly that he felt completely lost when trying to make some sense out of Old Believer matters (58). He took the long due initiative of asking Alexander for the formation of a Committee devoted to the examination of Old Believer matters (59). The Tsar approved the setting up of a special committee to investigate and elucidate matters concerning the Old Believers, but only on condition that the activity of the Committee and its very existence should remain a well-guarded secret from anybody except its members. Alexander probably wanted the maximum secrecy not only in order to avoid alarming the Old Believers and ensuring the effectiveness of the Committee in gathering information, but also in order to bolster his reputation as an enlightened and

58 TsGIA, fond 1473, op.20, no.1, V.P. Kochubey, letter to A.N. Golitsyn, 23 May 1820, f.475. Kochubey apologizes for his delay in dealing with the Old Believers, and explains: "Priznayus', chto ya teryayus' v delakh raskol'nich'ikh. Oni tak pereputany...".

59 TsGIA, fond 1473, op.1, no.1, A.N.Golitsyn, Otnoshenie Deystivitel'nago Taynago Sovetnika Knyazya Golitsyna k Generalu Arakcheevu, f.13.

tolerant Tsar (60). The Committee members, jointly chosen by Alexander and by A.N.Golitsyn, were Mikhail Desnitsky, the Metropolitan of Novgorod and St.Petersburg and first member of the Synod, Filaret Drozdov, later the famous Metropolitan of Moscow, who at the time was bishop of Tver', the Military Governor of St.Petersburg, General M.A. Miloradovich (1771-1825), the Minister of Religious Affairs and Popular Enlightenment, Prince Alexander Nikolaevich Golitsyn, and the Minister of Interior, Prince Viktor Pavlovich Kochubey. Later, in 1820, M.M. Speransky was also requested to attend the meetings of the Committee on all occasions when the subject under discussion was the Siberian Old Believers (61). V.M. Popov, the director of the Department of Popular Enlightenment, was appointed chief (and only) clerk with the duty of keeping the journals of the committee's meetings (62). This was an assembly of no small importance, as, with the exception of Arakcheev, who was to take over in 1824, it brought together all the most prominent figures of the time, who incidentally were also members of the Bible Society, an indication that a decision might finally have been taken to deal seriously with the question of the Old Believers.

60 Ibid., f.16v. See also TsGIA, fond 1473, op.5, no.1, A.N. Golitsyn, Vysochayshee povelenie o sostavlenii Sekretnago Komiteta, 17 February 1820, f.153.

61 On Speransky, see M.Raeff, Michael Speransky, and I. Katetov, Graf Mikhail.

62 The list of the members of the Secret Committee is in TsGIA, fond 1473, op.1, no.1, A.N. Golitsyn, Otnoshenie Deystvitel'nago Taynago Sovetnika Knyazya Golitsyna k Generalu... Grafu Arakcheevu..., cit. f.16v.

Mikhail Desnitsky (1762-1821) as a student had been a protégé of the Moscow Metropolitan Platon Levshin, who had introduced him into the "Philological seminar" held by the "Druzheskoe uchenoe obshchestvo" of N.I. Novikov and I.G. Schwarts. Under this influence, he became a mystic, deeply preoccupied with the perfection of the "interior man". In 1799, after the death of his wife and three children, he took monastic vows. In 1814, he entered the Synod and the Bible Society, of which he was vice-president, and in 1818 he became Metropolitan of Novgorod and St. Petersburg (63). When Golitsyn, who liked his mystical writings, appointed him Metropolitan trusting that he would be pliant and meek, Alexander warned his Minister that Mikhail might have a difficult disposition (64). In fact, two weeks before his death in 1821, Mikhail had a conflict with Golitsyn; the reason may have been Mikhail's support of Innokenty Smirnov, who was trying to limit the diffusion of Protestant literature such as Jung-Stilling's Triumphal Song or Commentary on the Apocalypse. Before dying, Mikhail wrote to Alexander warning him against Golitsyn's blindness (65). However, A.I. Turgenev, who was head of the Department of Popular Education in the Dual Ministry, though he did not share his ideals, liked Mikhail because of his respectfulness (66). For the time being, however, relations

63 P. Troitsky, 'Mikhail Desnitsky' and Ocherk zhizni Mikhaila; on his Novikovian mysticism see I.A. Chistovich, op.cit., pp. 114-115, 189.

64 See P.V. Znamensky, Rukovodstvo, p. 447. Letter of Alexander to Golitsyn of 26 March 1818 in Nikolay Mikhailovich, L'Empereur Alexandre I, vol. 1, p. 536.

65 See N. Stelletsky, Knyaz' A.N. Golitsyn, pp. 242-243, I. Smolitsch, Geschichte, p. 201, Vi_oel', op.cit., part 6, p. 37.

66 See Ostaf'evskiy arkhiv, vol. 2, p. 184.

between Golitsyn and Mikhail were still good enough for him to be included in the Secret Committee. Filaret Drozdov (1782-1867) was, at the time of his participation in the Secret Committee, a rather different character from the staunch conservative usually remembered. Also a protégé of Platon Levshin at the Trinity-St.Sergius Lavra, in 1803 he had concluded his studies there; in 1808 he had taken monastic vows and moved to St. Petersburg, where in 1810 he became a teacher at the St. Alexander Nevsky seminary. Unfavourably impressed by the mundane and secular ways of the capital, Filaret had looked hopefully at the possibilities of religious renewal which he saw in Golitsyn's and Alexander's thirst for religious experience. In 1812, for him the great hour of Russian Orthodoxy, he began a friendship with Golitsyn and started to celebrate in his private chapel (67). Filaret also participated in the reform of the religious schools, and his proposal for a new curriculum of studies was approved in 1814 (68). Although Filaret was a strong believer in the Gospels as the basis of all religious teaching, his membership of the Bible Society was the result not of his own initiative, but of Golitsyn's pressures. Filaret favoured a publication of the Bible in Russian, but believed that it should be annotated, not just the unadorned text as advocated by the

67 See R.I.Nichols, "Metropolitan Filaret of Moscow," pp.80-81, and by the same author, 'Filaret Drozdov'. For a different appraisal of Filaret's relationship with Golitsyn, see W.W.Sawatsky, op.cit., p.390n. See also G.L.Freeze, The Parish Clergy, pp.23-24.

68 See I.A.Chistovich, op.cit., pp.122-150.

interdenominationalist orientation of the Bible Society (69).

Relations between him and Golitsyn became strained after Golitsyn in 1819 confiscated and burnt Stanevich's Razgovor o bezsmertii dushi nad grobom mladentsa, because it attacked Labzin's Sionskii vestnik in the name of traditionalist Orthodoxy (70).

Vasily M. Popov's appointment as clerk of the Secret Committee was the most convenient for Golitsyn as Popov lived under Golitsyn's roof. He was a lonely widower with three daughters, and Golitsyn had become his patron by 1804; in 1812 he was nominated Secretary to the Bible Society, in 1817 he was made Director of the Education Department in the Dual Ministry. Golitsyn considered him his right hand, and when in 1822 Popov became ill and depressed, Golitsyn was very upset. Generally he was regarded as a fanatical and ridiculous man. He was a member of the mystical Tatarinova union, and tortured his daughter to force her to become a member (71).

The Secret Committee met for the first time on 25 February, 1820, at six o'clock in the evening in one

69 See R.I.Nichols, op.cit., p.100; J.Cohen Zacek, op.cit., p.44, and by the same author, 'The Russian Bible Society and the Russian Orthodox Church'.

70 See I.A.Chistovich, op.cit., pp.196-201 and Lashchenko, 'E.I.Stanevich'. In 1824, after Golitsyn's fall, Filaret himself was attacked by the new minister of Popular Enlightenment, A.S. Shishkov, for his catechism in Russian - see R.L. Nichols, op.cit., pp.158-165.

71 See W.W.Sawatskii, op.cit., pp.238,248-251, 356. In 1824 Popov translated into Russian a book by Johann Gossner, Geist des Lebens und der Lehre Jesu Christi, which triggered both his own and Golitsyn's downfall; on the episode, see A.Kotovich, Dukhovnaya tsensura, pp.131ff. and I.A.Chistovich, op.cit., pp.228-237. See also the harsh judgement on him of P.von Goetze, op.cit., p.72, and of A.I.Turgenev, in V.V.Pugachev 'Iz istorii', p.89.

of Metropolitan Mikhail's rooms in the Alexander Nevsky Lavra (72). It is worth discussing the whole meeting, as it provides an eloquent illustration of what exactly was known about the Old Believers. There were three items on the agenda. The first was the increase of the number of priestless Old Believers of the Theodosian sect in St.Petersburg. The other two were proposals from Mikhail and Filaret. For the first problem, the increase of the Theodosians, the Committee was hoping to put an end to it, without having recourse to the use of force and avoiding any public knowledge of any secret measures it might take (73). It appears that the members of the Committee had already for some time been interested in the Old Believers. Miloradovich, for instance, had already in 1819 ordered an investigation into the St.Petersburg Old Believers, and the first paper read aloud at the session by Popov was a thirty-two point report delivered to Miloradovich on 16 November 1819 by Colonel Fedor Nikolaevich Glinka, the same who had led the investigation on Gnusin (74). Five people had been interrogated; two were priests of the priestly branch of the Old Believers, the others were a

72 TsGIA, fond 1473, op.6, no.1, Zhurnal Komiteta, 25 February 1820, and op.14, no.1, Punagi sekretnago komiteta, f.173. M.N. Vasilevsky (Gosudarstvennaya sistema pp.10-11), states erroneously that the Committee had already met in 1817.

73 TsGIA, fond 1473, op.6, no.1, Zhurnal Komiteta, f.168.

74 See TsGIA, fond 1473, op.14, no.1., Donesenie Sanktpeterburgskomu Voennomu Generalu sledovateley ot 16 Noyabrya 1819, (hereafter Donesenie), ff.174-181. An investigation had been ordered by Miloradovich on November 12; the investigators must have worked in a great hurry, as their report was already written by November 16. It does not say what prompted the investigation into the Theodosian Volkovo community of St. Petersburg. On the terrible reputation of Glinka, and all the police functionaries of his chancellery, see Tolki i nastroyeniye umov v Rossii, p.671.

craftsman, a peasant woman and a merchant, Ivan Ivanov, who was a Theodosian warden (75). Glinka opened his report on the Old Believers by assuring that, during the whole investigation, it had been their principal rule to act with the maximum possible gentleness in the course of the interrogation; for the last fifty years or so this had been the staple official language in cases of this kind. Glinka had reported that they had acted "more by persuasion of the conscience than by threats to the feelings", by which it was presumably meant that no torture or violence had been used to establish the truth, which they had tried to discover "with constant patience" (76). Piecing together the information provided by the witnesses, which was checked against two books written in the previous century about the Old Belief (77), and combining field inquiry and reading, Glinka discovered that the Volkovo cemetery belonged to Theodosian otherwise called priestless Old Believers (Glinka does not seem to have glimpsed the existence of different priestless branches); that it had been founded in 1777 and that its leaders were chosen without any communication with the government in assemblies of three hundred or more Theodosians who gathered in a private chapel; the Theodosians of St.Petersburg had connections with the communities inside Russia, notably with Moscow, as well as with

75 Ibid., f.175. See also TsGIA, fond 834, op.2, no.1666, Ivan Ivanov, Report of 12 December 1819, f.90v; and fond 1473, op.14, no.1, Zapiska o Feodosievskoy sekte, f.192v.

76 Ibid., f.174v.

77 These were the 1709 Rozysk o raskol'nicheskoy brynskoj vere of Dmitry Tuptalo Rostovsky and A.I.Zhuravlev's Polnoe Istoricheskoe Izvestie. See Donesenie, quoted, f.181v.

the communities abroad in Prussia, Poland, Moldavia and Finland; besides they were in the habit of sending missionaries to various regions, who travelled equipped with broadsheets in which the Church and its priests were represented in an offensive manner; these broadsheets enabled them to have a powerful effect on the "rough sensibilities of the populace". Glinka also reported the discovery that the Theodosians did not acknowledge the sacraments administered by the Church, or respect the oath to the Sovereign, whom they did not call "pious" (blagochestivyi), and the laws, which for them were heretical and antichristian; their books were printed in Klintsey, in the guberniya of Chernigov, on private printing presses (78); their workers were not registered, some of them were fugitive serfs, or army deserters who lived under false names, but there were also people belonging to the gentry; they did not administer medical treatment to the ill, and their pregnant women would go into town to be delivered, then come back to the community and ask permission to bring up the child whom they would claim had been found abandoned; some would get married in the Orthodox Church, but return to their sect shortly after marriage. Glinka had also discovered "by chance" the existence of two monasteries on the White Sea Coast, where the level of corruption and promiscuity was extremely high, and babies were drowned in rivers and lakes (evidently Glinka had until then been ignorant of the existence of the Vyg and Leksa monasteries).

78 On the Klintsey printing presses see I.Kalugin, 'Neskol'ko slov'; V.P.Semennikov, 'Tipografii raskol'nikov'; and A.Pavlov, 'Sud'by'.

79 Donesenie, ff.177-179v. This is the only mention to my knowledge of an 1819 council.

The inquiry had also led to the discovery that a council had been held in 1819, which had passed resolutions strengthening the prohibition of marriage and of prayers for the Tsar (79). Cases of connivance between the Old Believers and the police had also been discovered; the large sums of money offered by the Old Believers always constituted a powerful and convincing argument. Their capital had also helped them to survive the hardships of 1812 (80).

A second report drafted on the same day by the Secret Committee for Miloradovich concerned the discovery of important documents about the doctrines of some "innovators" or reformers among the Theodosians. It was claimed that the so-called reformers had come to the fore and gained strength after 1812, that they preached disobedience to the authorities, self-government, celibacy and corruption under the appearance of virginity. The means by which they propagated their views among the populace were broadsheets; the report commented that they were extremely obnoxious to society as a whole, as they undermined the institution of marriage which lies at the root of the well-being and demographic strength of the fatherland (81).

80 Ibid., f.180v.

81 TsGIA, fond 1473, op.6, no.1, Zhurnal komiteta, 25 February 1820, f.169, item 2. For the report: TsGIA, fond 1473, op.14, no.1. Ob otkrytii vazhnykh dokumentov obnoruzhivayushchikh sushchestvo ucheniya vvoditeley novizny (reformatarov) v staroobryadstve, ff.182-184 (another copy in TsGIA, fond 834, op.2, no.1666, ff. 59-61); this last document is of particular interest because it shows to what extent the investigators could misinterpret the books and broadsheets which came into their hands; e.g., a "kartina" which purports to defend marriage, the original of which is in TsGIA, fond 1473, op.14, no.1, f.214, is interpreted in this report as being a piece of propaganda against marriage.

These reports were now placed before the Secret Committee; it can easily be imagined what a concerned and horrified reaction they must have elicited from government officials raised in a tradition of policies aiming at the increase of the inhabitants of the Empire: a general policy in which religious toleration was seen as an ancillary strategy. The same commission had also drafted a third report in which it voiced its apprehensions that the transgression ascribed to the Theodosians were in fact shared by all the Old Believers. After having examined some papers confiscated in the Volkovo cemetery, Glinka and his subordinates had been inspired by their astounding bureaucratic acumen to discover that "the so-called old faith is shared by nearly all Old Believer sects (sic!) but the abuses were something recent" (82). While a certain dissimilarity in the dogmas of the faith, in church rituals and such matters were of no particular importance in conditions of virtual tolerance, the doctrines which had allegedly arisen since 1811, were something to be seriously checked, and Glinka suggested that the government should take measures to encourage the "well-intentioned" Old Believers who wished to achieve a reunification of all the Old Believer sects (83). Among the objects confiscated in Volkovo there was a painting portraying Napoleon in St. Helena, a translation into Russian of Napoleon's proclamation in Egypt (84)

82 TsGIA, fond 1473, op.14, no.1, Donesenie, 17 November 1819, ff. 219-227.

83 Ibid., f.226.

84 The Russian translation of Napoleon's declaration is in TsGIA, fond 1473, op.15, ff.292-v.

and illuminated manuscripts portraying Antichrist in the act of blessing a couple who were being married in the church; virginity was portrayed as the perfection of a circle, and the hands of parents had the word "puppies" painted on their back (this meant that children generated at a time when the sacrament of marriage no longer existed could not rise from the animality of birth to the Christian redemption from it). Having listened to these reports, the Committee summed them up in what amounted to a general description of Theodosian beliefs and institutions. It is disturbing to realize that their conclusions were apparently entirely and uncritically based on the information provided by the report of the police, which in its turn was based on the testimony of five people chosen at random. There is no evidence that any of the Committee members corrected or added in any way to the information provided (85).

In spite of regarding the Theodosians as very dangerous, the Committee judged that it would have been counterproductive to take any direct action against them. It took therefore a very moderate resolution: to take action against them only in cases of transgression of the civil laws; that the police should exercise tighter control on Old Believers living inside communities, checking that all had a passport, an honourable trade or craft and a continuous occupation. Those without a passport were to be

85 See TsGIA, fond 834, op.2, no.1666, O sostoyanii i deystviyakh sekt voobshche i Feodoseevskoy v osobennosti, ff. 62-64. In this report the Theodosians are portrayed as a very dangerous sect; and are associated with the skoptsy, who "prepyatstvuyut razmnozheniyu naroda" (f.63v).

taken into custody and be subjected to an investigation in order to be returned to their places of origin. The communities should report to the police on all arrivals and departures of people; murders of new-born babies and abortions were to be subjected to investigation; and ill people left without medical treatment should be taken care of. The police were to use all efforts to get hold of the main "innovators", as the opponents of marriage had been defined by Ivanov. The above mentioned measures were to be applied to all Theodosian communities in Russia while the Committee continued to elaborate a comprehensive policy concerning the Theodosians also taking into account the suggestions of Mikhail and Filaret which were the second and third items on the agenda (86). Mikhail's suggestions basically concerned the usage of the term "Old Ritualist" (staroobryadets); he strongly objected to its being applied to Old Believers other than the edinovertsy, and he insisted that all Old Believers except those of the edinoverie Church should be defined as "schismatics" (raskol'niki). His notes are full of hostility to the Old Believers, "those evil old women of the Preobrazhenskoe community". He recommended sudden inspections and round-ups of the police in order to catch out women giving birth, and people without a passport in flagrante (87). In short, what he was proposing was a campaign for the moral discrediting of the Old

86 TsGIA, fond 1473, op.6, no.1, Zhurnal Komiteta, 25 February 1820, ff.178-183.

87 See TsGIA, fond 1473, op.18, no.1, Pis'ma k pervomu zhurnalu, 25 February 1820, f.366.

Believers. Similarly Filaret in his opinion of 6 February 1820 stressed that the police should keep a special watch on pregnant women, especially on those who had assumed the rules of a virginal life, and give publicity to the presence of illegitimate children, so that the schismatics would no longer be able to attract to their faith by means of their false holiness, but would be seen in all their real shame. Filaret also believed that the government should take more energetic action against "innovators" such as Gnusin. The police surveillance of Old Believers meetings should be kept completely secret, so as to avoid the impression that the government knew about these meetings and tolerated them; the checks on passports should be carried out gradually, but firmly (88). Miloradovich fully agreed with Filaret's observation, that it would be most inconvenient to have policemen and state functionaries openly present at Old Believer meetings, since this might persuade the Old Believers that the Government was closing an eye to their activities (89). Mikhail's suggestions were also taken in due consideration; collating the final text of the Committee's journal with the original draft, one can observe the substitution of "raskol'nik" for "staroobryadets", of "tolk" (sect) for "veroisповедание" (profession of faith) (90). The offensive term "raskol'nik" had come into disuse as a result of the policy of religious toleration of Catherine II. It was never abolished, as had been requested by the Vyg elder Andrey Borisov in 1782 in a petition

83 Ibid., ff.367-v. On Filaret and the Old Believers in a later period, see V.Belikov, Deyatel'nost'; V. Titlinov, 'K voprosu'. and Filaret, Besedy.

83 TsGIA, fond 1473, op.18, Bunagi, 25 February 1820, f.369.

90 TsGIA, fond 1473, op.7, Zhurnal Komiteta, 17 March 1820, f.97v.

to the St.Petersburg Governor General I.S.Potapov (91), but, after the abolition of the double poll tax in 1782, the use of the term "raskol'nik" had ceased to have any meaning in civil and legal matters (92). However, the belief that the use of the term "raskol'nik" had been forbidden by Catherine II was widespread among the Old Believers, and was one of the reasons of their affection for the enlightened Empress (93). The discontinuation of the term "raskol'nik" and the consequent equality of all citizens in front of the state in disregard of their religious allegiance can be regarded as an important conquest of civil rights in Catherine's time. It is sad to see how quickly, in a period in which pietism was "raised to the status of a virtual state ideology", this achievement was surrendered to the dominant church without any resistance on the part of the lay members of the Secret Committee (94). The abolition of the distinction between Old Believers and schismatics could not but add to the confusion in such cases as when the phrase "multiplicity of Old Believers and schismatic sects" was turned into "multiplicity of schismatic sects". This allowed for an indiscriminate lumping together of the Old Believers with sects which were

91 See V. Belolikov, 'Iz istorii pomorskogo raskola', p.137.

92 See PSZ, vol XXI, n.15473, 20 July 1782, and PSPREA, vol II, n.1096, 7 March 1783, vol III, no.1603, 3 October 1795. See also N.Y. Pokrovsky, Antifeodal'nyy protest, pp.372-373.

93 See, e.g., P.O. Lyubopytny, Istoricheskiy slovar', p.51.

94 D.W. Treadgold, The West, p.116.

often more fanatical and dangerous. The Theodosians could be assimilated to the skoptsy (eunuchs), a confusion very much to the advantage of the church. For instance it was claimed in a report of 1819-20 that "the actions of the Theodosian sect, if one does not quickly erect a barrier against them could be discovered unexpectedly, and overthrow suddenly the whole order existing in the state". The Theodosian sect was accused of fighting both supreme powers, "the dominant church and the sovereign power", and of not recognising "the sovereign as head, and the Church as mother of the State". Although differences in rituals were of themselves not important, the Eucharist, Baptism and marriage give cohesion to society: "for their very nature, it is proper that the people be guided", for this reason those who move away from general customs and laws give themselves to personal passions and are guided "exclusively by personal advantages and considerations". The Theodosians were "profit-minded and rebellious", as witnessed in the Moscow riot of 1771 (95). A statesman is bound to see that the small sect of the skoptsy and the Theodosians "clearly and actively oppose the increase of the population" because the first deny the possibility of marrying, while the second kill the fruit of their unfruitful unions. "But God preserve us from the very thought of open persecution. No! Against such people one must use their own weapons: a profound secrecy and ceaseless activity". The abandonment of a policy of toleration could not be carried out openly, but the danger

95 This was an unfounded accusation. See Chapter 4.

represented by Theodosian doctrines called for secret measures (96).

In the final draft of the minutes of the meeting, Mikhail and Filaret obtained the addition of details pertaining to the refusal of marriage and of prayers for the authorities, and the subterfuges employed to hide fugitives, such as double walls and secret cellars (97). The committee had been alerted to the danger represented by the Theodosians.

Three weeks later, on 17 March 1820, the Committee met for the second time (98). At some stage before this second meeting Mikhail and Filaret had been in touch with the Ministry of the Interior, V.P.Kochubey, and had submitted to him a report expressing their views concerning the steps which the government should undertake against heretics and schismatics. There were two ways to look at heretics and schismatics, suggested Mikhail and Filaret: either as upsetting the unity and peace of the church, or as upsetting the tranquillity and good of the state. It would be possible to show complete tolerance were it not that the one cannot be disrupted without at the same time damaging the other. What affects the peace of the Church has equally damaging effect on the state, and by affecting indifference to faith the state would destroy its own foundations. It followed therefore, concluded the two church hierarchs, that toleration of heresies and schismatics ought to be limited to a smaller or larger

96 TsGIA, fond 834, op.2, no.1666, O sostoyanii i deystviyakh sekt voobshche i Feodoseevskoy v osobennosti, ff.62-64.

97 TsGIA, fond 1473, op.18, Zhurnal Komiteta, 25 February 1820, ff.371-373v: this copy of the minutes contains the alterations requested by Mikhail and Filaret.

98 TsGIA, fond 1473, op.7, no.1, Zhurnal Komiteta, 17 March 1820, ff. 95-104.

degree, and the criteria for toleration should be the higher or lower degree of disruption of the state's tranquillity. There should be no place for the toleration of doctrines which upset the foundations of the commonwealth. For to tolerate in the structure of the body a limb infected with a mortal illness would amount to a breach of the sacred obligation to preserve one's own life. But in all cases a distinction should be drawn between the infected and the infectors; only the latter were to be pruned from the social body, while the infected ones should be tolerated and cured - "But these are indeed the principles by which present legislation is inspired; it would be enough to implement it more thoroughly", observed Filaret and Mikhail as a precaution before starting to enumerate the fourteen points of their proposals (99). In these proposals the two ecclesiastics drew up a table of the sects, classified according to their level of danger for the state. On the basis of their classification, schismatics were not to be allowed to be elected to posts of social responsibility. Once again, Mikhail and Filaret were pressing for a reversal of one of the civil rights of Catherine the Great's time: in 1785 the election to organ of urban government had been opened to all, disregard of their religious allegiance (100). In general, the policy of religious toleration pursued by Catherine II had been regarded with alarm by Platon Levshin, who nevertheless had not found in himself the strength of

99 TsGIA, fond 1473, op.19, no.1 (also in op.7, no.1, ff.101v-103), Filaret Drozdov, Mikhail of Novgorod: O sredstvakh protiv eresey i raskolov, ff.404-407.

100 PSZ, vol.XXII, no.16238, 12 August 1785. This was the result of P.A. Rumyantsev-Zadunaysky's intervention in favour of the Old Believers.

character necessary to voice his opposition (101). Now his former pupils and proteges, Mikhail and Filaret, were presented with an opportunity to undo what the church had not previously been able to stop. According to their proposal, the priestly Old Believers were to be tolerated (but not protected) more than others, as their rules did not entail a disruption of social order; but their priests, monks and elders were not to show themselves in public, except in those places where their presence had long been traditional. Old Believers should not be admitted to positions of power because it was well known that they abused their authority to oppress weak Orthodox folk; in the application of this rule a certain gradualness was recommended, because priestly Old Believers could be allowed subordinate positions, priestless Old Believers of the branch acknowledging marriage and prayer for the Tsar could be allowed subordinate positions only in case of necessity, and the other priestless Old Believers, as well as the s'topty, should not be allowed access to any position of power whatsoever. In those societies composed exclusively of schismatics, the positions of command were to be given exclusively to the priestly Old Believers. People who attempted to convert and proselytize among the Orthodox should be tried (102); the false teachers who preached against prayers for the Tsar, against marriage and childbearing should be cut out as a plague from the state and be handed over to the Church to be set

101 On Platon's muted opposition, see P.Pera, 'Edinoverie', pp.295-296, 322-324.

102 TsGIA, fond 1473, op.19, no.1, f.102.

on the right path. People led astray by false teachers should be tolerated only on condition that they did not try to spread their beliefs; all the meeting places of the skoptsy were to be shut down and no Old Believer public processions were to be allowed. Newly-built churches and chapels should be destroyed for, as Mikhail and Filaret observed with bitterness, it is not fair that schismatics should have greater rights than the Orthodox (103). The report concluded by indicating some positive measures, such as the institution of missionaries who, in order to arouse suspicion or hostility, were to travel under some pretext; the education of children was also recommended, for the purpose of putting an end to that state of ignorance which lies at the base of the schism. This report was discussed by the Committee and the proposals met with the approval of all its members, who judged them fully in harmony with the aims of the government (104). Kochubey also presented his own proposals concerning the last point raised by Mikhail and Filaret, namely the education of children. He recommended that measures be taken against the

103 This proposal was later confirmed: see TsGIA, fond 1472, op.2, n.1, Se'kretnoe polozhenie 22 iyunya 1823 goda preosvyashchennykh: Mitropolita Serafima i Arkhiepiskopa Filareta, o raskol'nikh molitvennykh domakh i o prochem, ff. 25-66. Serafim Glagolevsky (1763-1843) had replaced Mikhail as Metropolitan of St.Petersburg and member of the Secret Committee in 1821. His appearance in front of the Senate on 14 December 1825 was instrumental in inducing the assembled troops to give up the arms after Miloradovich had already been killed. See P. Troitsky 'Mitropolit Serafim' and A.A.Alferov, 'Mitropolit Serafim'. On the problems of the Orthodox parish clergy see G.L. Freeze, op.cit., pp.52-65.

104 TsGIA, fond 1473, op.7, no.1, Filaret Drozdov, Mikhail Desnitsky, O sredstvakh protiv eresey i raskolov..., f.103.

increase of Old Believers: Yochubey feared that their number might well be above the two millions estimated on the basis of a superficial assessment, and that it was likely to increase two to four times in the following ten years. After such an increase, the Old Believers could present a real danger for the state, for instance by refusing military service. For the time being, observed Kobuchey, the actions of the Old Believers were limited to pushy intriguing (pronyrstvo) and, as he wryly recalled hinting at the widespread usage of bribes, to "financial contributions to the advantage of authorities subordinated to the government" (105). Kochubey believed therefore in the necessity of speedy and timely measures, for the improvement of the education of the clergy could not be considered enough. Its fruits would make themselves felt only much later.

Kochubey believed the education of youths from the ordinary people to be an urgent task. Voicing his disagreement with the opinion that the education of the people may be harmful, he stressed the usefulness of an education inspired by the principles of the Christian faith and in harmony with the future profession and station in life of the pupils. To this end, village schools should be set up, first at an experimental level in all the lands of the crown (koronnye imeniya) after which the nobility should be discreetly encouraged to do the same on its lands. Kochubey, faithful in this to the ideals of the Bible Society of which he was a prominent member, believed that such an

105 TsGIA, fond 1473, op.7, no.1, Zhurnal Komiteta, 17 March 1820, ff. 97-v.

aim could be reached by the use of Lancasterian schools, which would not require great investment, or present problems in the preparation of the teachers (106). Golitsyn approved and believed these schools could act as a barrier to the diffusion of the schism "because it is known that the impressions received in one's first youth exert a great influence throughout life". The knowledge of prayers and of the catechism would have protected children from false preachers, while schools of that kind would not upset agricultural activities and would at the same time shield the children from the effects of a harmful inactivity by keeping them busy everyday in useful and salutary occupations (107).

The committee met for the third time on 27 May 1820. At this meeting it was resolved to take all necessary measures for the arrest of the dangerous Theodosian Gnusin. Besides, on Kochubey's initiative, Mikhail and Filaret's proposals concerning the participation of Old Believers to organs of local government were accepted: whenever Orthodox candidates should be eligible, they were to be given precedence regardless of how small their numbers might be if compared to that of the Old Believers. As for the criteria by which to discriminate among the Old Believers, Kochubey accepted those suggested at the second meeting by Mikhail and Filaret, namely, to distinguish by degrees

106 TsGIA, fond 1473, op.7, no.1, ff. 98-100; and op. 19, no.1, Zapiska grafa Kochubeya, ff. 385-460. On the Lancasterian Schools see N.Tomashevskaya, 'Lankastersk'e shkoly v Rossii'; Bollingsworth, 'Lancasterian schools'; and J.Cohen Zacek, 'The Lancasterian school movement'.

107 TsGIA, fond 1473, op.7, no.1, Zhurnal Komiteta, 17 March 1820, f.100.

of danger to the state (103).

A fourth meeting, on 7 December 1820, was devoted to the settlement of a conflict concerning the priestless Old Believers of Vol'sk (109). This can be taken as an indication that the Committee was gradually being turned into a supreme (and secret) instance for the settlement of matters concerning the Old Believers.

The foundation of the Secret Committee constituted in a way a reversal of the policy of Catherine II. On 15 december 1763 the Empress has abolished the Raskol'nich'ya kontora, which had been established in 1724 as an institution attached to the Senate. Its function had been originally the collection of the special taxes paid by the Old Believers, and had gradually been extended to all matters pertaining to them, persecution included (110). In the period between 1763 and the abolition in 1782 of the special taxes paid by the Old Believers, these were paid to the guberniya and provincial chancelleries, and to the magistraty in the case of the Old Believer merchants. With the establishment

108 TsGIA, fond 1473, op.20, no.1, Zhurnal Komiteta, 27 May 1820, ff. 478-9, also op.3, ff. 105-112. Other matters discussed were the case of a Riga guberniya secretary, a certain Chernyavsky, who had accepted bribes from Old Believers, the 1816 conflict of Preobrazhenskoe, fines for Old Believers who were found without a passport (op. 19, f.410); the Tsar himself, actually, advised against the extraction of fines from Old Believers for fear that this might facilitate abuses of power on the part of the police (TsGIA, fond 1473, op. 19, f.416): see TsGIA, fond 834, op. 2, no.1666, report of Ivan Ivanov, 14 March 1820, about the extortion of 270,000 rubles from the Old Believers.

109 TsGIA, fond 1473, op.9, no.1, Zhurnal Komiteta, 7 December 1820, ff.113-120.

110 See B.Nechaev, 'Raskol'nich'ya Kontora' and PSZ, vol. XVI, no.11898, section 19.

of the Secret Committee the raskol'nich'ya kontora was re--established in all but its name; furthermore, unlike the old petrine institution, its very existence remained secret (111). As we have seen, the Secret Committee reversed some of the achievements of Catherine's time. On the other hand, there are indications that some Old Believers were hoping to derive some advantage from the establishment of a permanent institution to which they could address complaints and proposals. Their ambition was to emancipate themselves completely from the tutelage of the Synodal Church. An episode concerning the priestly Old Believers of Ekaterinburg shows that, in the years we are dealing with, the Secret Committee did not necessarily become associated with a policy of intolerance and persecution like it did in the time of Nicholas I. On the contrary, it could have been used to deal with some of the problems left unsolved by the tolerant policy of Catherine II. In fact, if the Old Believers were no longer persecuted, the rights of those who did not wish to join edinoverie and retain instead their own "fugitive priesthood" were not recognized, their priests lived in fear of ecclesiastical punishments and the existence of their churches and chapels was not secured by the law. In practice, this meant that the right of worship of the priestly Old Believers as such was not fully recognised, and their church remained open to persecution at the first reversal of government policy (112). This is what the

111 For instance, Varadinov (Istoriya ministerstva, vol 8, p.191) gives 1825 as the foundation date of the committee.

112 This in spite of occasional ad hoc ukazy which allowed the popovtsy to keep their priests: see, e.g., ukaz of 12 May 1803 (Khartulary, Obzor, pp.69-70) and of June 1803 (Ibid., p.70).

leader of the Ekaterinburg priestly Old Believers, the merchant Yakim Merkurovich Ryazanov, set about to remedy. On 3 January 1818, he presented to Golitsyn a project for the creation in Ekaterinburg of an independent society of Siberian Old Believers. The petition was signed by 1370 Old Believers of Perm', Tobol'sk and Orenburg. The project was recommended to the attention of Golitsyn by the Bishop of Perm', Iustin, who was grateful of the financial support offered by Ryazanov to the local seminary, and spoke very highly of him (113). If the project had been approved, the Old Believers would have received permission to profess their faith, take oaths accordingly, erect churches and chapels outside of any external control, create their own independent governing body, directly responsible to the Ministry of Religious Affairs, and this body would have had exclusive authority on priests consecrated in the Synodal Church who joined the Old Believers; besides, these priests would be exempted from ecclesiastical punishments, their defection from the Synodal Church would not be prosecuted, and the sacraments administered by them would be recognized (114). Golitsyn replied that the Old Believers should simply join edinoverie, and be under the immediate jurisdiction of the Synod, bypassing the diocesan Bishop. The Old Believers found this proposal unsatisfactory and replied that they could not accept it because their followers would have deserted them (115). The Old Believers submitted

113 TsGIA, fond 1473, op.1, no.2, Report to Golitsyn of Iustin of Perm', 1 February 1817, ff. 33-44.

114 See N. I. Nadezhdin, 'Starshiny', pp.676-679.

115 See V.I.Baydin, 'Novye istochniki', pp.97-98. Golitsyn had always regarded edinoverie as a suitable and sufficient solution to the demands of the Old Believers: see TsGIA, fond 1284,

therefore another project, according to which their leaders would be directly submitted to a special government committee in St. Petersburg, composed of the Metropolitan of St. Petersburg, the Minister of Internal Affairs, and other high functionaries such as Speransky and Golitsyn; this committee would have under its jurisdiction provincial committees composed of the Governor, the local procurator, and the local bishop (116). From this project it can be surmised that the secret of a special committee may somehow have leaked to the Old Believers, and that they viewed its existence with a certain optimism. Partly this optimism was justified: after a meeting on 8 March 1822 (117) a secret resolution was passed on 26 March which allowed the Old Believers to keep their priests, churches and chapels (118), though it did not satisfy the request of independence from the ecclesiastical authorities. Besides, on 28 September 1823 Alexander himself visited Ekaterinburg, accepted Ryazanov's hospitality, and gave him permission to set crosses on the churches and chapels (119).

op.175, no.3, Secret instructions of Golitsyn to the Civil Governor of Vladimir, A.D.Dolgoruky, 6 February 1812. This was also Filaret's position: see Materialy dlya istorii Moskovskoy eparkhii, pp.257-259.

116 Ibid., p.99.

117 TsGIA, fond 1473, op.10, Zhurnal Komiteta, 8 March 1822, pp.121-136. Speransky attended this meeting as Governor General of Siberia.

118 TsGIA, fond 1473, op.3, Zapiska... Kochubeya o raskol'nich'ikh molitvennykh domakh, 16 May 1823, ff. 108-119; see also Khartulari, op.cit., p.73,77. This resolution was secret, but the Old Believers got hold of a copy and distributed it: see Nadezhdin, op.cit., pp.742-755.

119 Nadezhdin, op.cit., p.636; see also Novokreshche ji, Iz istorii, p.61; Baydin, op.cit., p.98, and TsGIA, fond 1473, op.1, no.2, report of Iustin Bishop of Perm', 20 September 1817, f.9v.

It seemed a good beginning, but deceptively so. Kochubey became apprehensive of the great number of Old Believers, and of the fact that in some parishes nearly all the parishioners had gone over to the Old Faith, thus endangering the material survival of Orthodox priests. The Committee resolved that, as the extinction of Orthodox parishes could not be allowed, the Old Believers should not discontinue their support of the Orthodox priests (120). In doing so, Kochubey was responding to the pressure of Golitsyn (121) who had been persuaded by Serafim of the dangers facing the church. On 17 February 1823, Serafim, the Metropolitan of St. Petersburg, wrote to Golitsyn that the Church and the fatherland were in "great danger", the church of losing its flock, the state from the disorder which would have devolved from the implacable religious enmity among its children following a victory of the Old Believers. Serafim implored Golitsyn as the man "chosen by God's Providence" to defend the church with all the means at his disposal, including his influence on the Tsar. Golitsyn was to persuade Alexander that he would be rewarded with personal and eternal salvation "for the preservation of the Christian church from schism and mistakes" (122). Moreover, in June 1823 Serafim and Filaret presented a joint Sekretnoe polozhenie (secret report), in which they

120 TsGIA, fond 1473, opis 13, no.8, Zhurnal Komiteta, 22 November 1822, approved by the Tsar on 17 February 1823, ff.167-165.

121 TsGIA, fond 1473, op.24, letter of Golitsyn to Kochubey, 1 March 1823, ff. 634-635.

122 TsGIA, fond 1473, op.24, letter of Serafim Glagolevsky to Golitsyn, 17 February 1823, ff. 632-633.

expressed their resentment of the greater independence enjoyed by the Old Believers compared to the control and interference from the state to which the Orthodox church was subjected. They accused the Old Believers of being attached more to "wilfulness, anarchy and lack of accountability", than to the Old Rituals as such, and of attracting others to their faith by means of their wealth, the hope of doing equally well in life by joining the schism, and the attractiveness of a lascivious life outside any control (123). Compared to the lot of an Old Believer nastavnik, an Orthodox priest fared worse: he was responsible to his superiors, could not travel more than thirty versts away from his parish without special permission, and received little support, while the nastavnik would be freed from all fiscal and social concerns by his flock. The Old Believers were building churches and chapels outside of any control, with their own money, while the Synodal Church did not have enough funds and was not allowed to build without special permission. The Old Believers could set up monastic communities of their own initiative, while an Orthodox man who should have wished to enter a monastery had to overcome all sorts of obstacles. The Old Believers were free to confess only when they wished to, while the Orthodox had to pay a fine in case they did not comply with the obligation of confessing once a year. The Orthodox were subjected to strict regulations concerning marriage, while the Old Believers were

123 TsGIA, fond 1473, op.2, Sekretnoe polozhenie o raskol'nich'ikh molitvennykh domakh of Filaret and Serafim, 22 June 1823, ff. 31-35.

free to live together and separate as they wished (124). Serafim and Filaret urged that limits be set to this "disorder" of the Old Believers, especially against those who refused marriage; the Russian government should have followed the example of the English in India, who tried to stop the practice of burning widows (125). In any case "it is indulgence enough for the schismatics, if one places them under the same limitations that are fixed for the Orthodox; to let the schismatics enjoy the privilege of a greater freedom would be clearly unjust" (126). However, Serafim and Filaret advise gradualness in the change of policy, for fear that the Civil Governors might become aware of a change in the government policy towards the Old Believers inspired by principles different from those hitherto professed (127).

Events then took the well known turn: on 15 May the conspiracy of Archimandrite Foty Spassky and Magnitsky resulted in Golitsyn's fall from power (128); on 23 November the dismissed minister entrusted to Arakcheev the papers of the Secret Committee, accompanying them with a letter in which he explained the genesis of the Committee, and that its existence was unknown to all except its members (129).

124 Ibid., ff. 36-41.

125 Ibid., ff. 46v-47.

126 Ibid., f.54.

127 Ibid., ff. 58-61v. Speransky, the Governor of Siberia, like other state functionaries raised in the tradition of enlightened absolutism, favoured a policy of toleration (see Katetov, op.cit., pp.87-153).

128 See Sawatsky, op.cit., pp.404-455; Wieczynski, 'Apostle of Obscurantism' and Flynn, 'Magnitsky's purge'.

129 TsGIA, fond 1473, op.1, no.1, Letter of Golitsyn to Arakcheev, 23 November 1824, ff. 13-22.

When Alexander's reign came to a close, the Secret Committee had thus already assumed the physiognomy it was to maintain in years to come. Government policy towards the Old Believers was already heading in the direction it is customarily associated with the reign of Nicholas I (130). It cannot be denied that the debates on marriage of the priestless Old Believers were instrumental in causing in the government more alarm than was perhaps warranted, and precipitating a reversal of policy from the time of Catherine the Great and from the first periods of Alexander's reign.

130 See M.N.Vasil'evsky, Gosudarstvennaya sistema, and Yasevitch-Borodaevskaya, Bor'ba za veru.

List of abbreviations

<u>AKV</u>	<u>Arkhiv knyazya Vorontsova</u>
<u>B</u>	<u>Voltaire's correspondence</u> (Th. Bestermann ed.) 107 vols., Genève, 1953-1965
BAN OR	Biblioteka Akademii Nauk-Otdel rukopisev
<u>BiE</u>	<u>Brokgauz i Ffron-Tsitsiklopedicheskiy slovar'</u>
<u>BS</u>	<u>Bratskoe slovo</u>
<u>CASS</u>	<u>Canadian and American Slavic Studies</u>
<u>Chteniya OIDR</u>	<u>Chteniya v obshchestve istorii i drevnostey rossiyskikh</u>
<u>Chteniya OLDP</u>	<u>Chteniya obshchestva lyubiteley dukhovnogo prosveshcheniya</u>

<u>CMP</u>	<u>Cahiers du Monde russe et soviétique</u>
<u>CSS</u>	<u>California Slavic Studies</u>
Druzhinin	V.G.Druzhinin, <u>Pisaniya russkikh</u> <u>starobryadtsev</u> , St.Petersburg, 1912
<u>EMPA</u>	<u>Ezhegodnik Muzeia Istorii Religii i Ateizma</u>
GIM	Gosudarstvennyi Istoricheskiy Muzei, Moscow
<u>HSS</u>	<u>Harvard Slavic Studies</u>
<u>IORYAS</u>	<u>Izvestiya otdeleniya russkogo yazyka i</u> <u>slovesnosti Akademii Nauk</u>
<u>IV</u>	<u>Istoricheskiy Vestnik</u>
<u>IZ</u>	<u>Istoricheskiye Zapiski</u>
<u>JGOE</u>	<u>Jahrbuecher zur Geschichte Osteuropas</u>

Karataev	I.P. Karataev, "Opisanie slavyano-russkikh knig", <u>SORYaS</u> , 1883, XXIV, 2
<u>Kh.Cht.</u>	<u>Khristianskoe Chtenie</u>
Klepikov	S.A.Klepikov, <u>Filigrani na bumage russkogo proizvodstva XVIII-nachala XXveka</u> , Moscow, 1973
<u>KS</u>	<u>Kievskaya Starina</u>
<u>MERSH</u>	<u>Modern Encyclopaedia of Russian and Soviet Studies</u> , J.L.Wieczynsky ed., Academic International Press, vol.1 1976 (in progress).
MCU OR	Moskovskiy Gosudarstvennyy Universitet-Otdel rukopisey
<u>ODDS</u>	<u>Opisanie dokumentov i del, khranyashchikhsya v arkhive Sv. Prav. Sinoda</u> , 31 vols. St. Petersburg, 1869-1916

OR CBL	Otdel Rukopisey Gosudarstvennoy Biblioteki im. Lenina
ORK	Otdel redkikh knig
PIOS	Pontificium Institutum Orientaliorum Studiorum, Rome.
<u>Pr.Ob.</u>	<u>Pravoslavnoe Obozrenie</u>
<u>PS</u>	<u>Pravoslavnyy Sobesednik</u>
<u>PSPREA</u>	<u>Polnoe sobranie postanovleniy i</u> <u>rasporyazheniy po vedomstu pravoslavnogo</u> <u>ispovedaniya Rossiyskoy imperii.</u> <u>Tsarstvovanie Imperatritsy Ekateriny</u> <u>Alekseevny, 3 vols., St.Petersburg,</u> 1910-1918.
PSS	<u>Polnoe sobranie sochineniy</u>
<u>PSZ</u>	<u>Polnoe sobranie zakonov Rossiiskoy imperii,</u> 45 vols, St. Petersburg, 1830

<u>PA</u>	<u>Russkij arkhiv</u>
<u>PPS</u>	<u>Russkij biograficheskij slovar'</u>
<u>RS</u>	<u>Russkaya Starina</u>
<u>Sbornik OLDP</u>	<u>Sbornik obshchestva lyubiteley dukhovnago prosveshcheniya</u>
<u>SFER</u>	<u>Slavonic and East European Review</u>
<u>SIRIO</u>	<u>Sbornik imperatorskogo russkogo istoricheskogo obshchestva</u>
Sopikov	V.S.Sopikov, <u>Opyt rossiiskoy bibliografii</u> , 5 vols., St.Petersburg, 1904-1906

<u>SK</u>	<u>Ŗvodnyĭ katalog russkoy knigi grazhdanskoy pechatĭ XVIII veka, 1725-1800, 5 vols., Moscow, 1966</u>
<u>SORYaS</u>	<u>Sbornik' otdeleniya russkogo yazyka i slovesnosti</u>
<u>SR</u>	<u>Slavic Review</u>
<u>TĖDA</u>	<u>Trudy kievskoy dukhovnoy akademii</u>
<u>TODRL</u>	<u>Trudy otŭela drevnerusskoy literatury</u>
TsGADA	Tsentral'nyĭ Gosudarstvennyĭ Arkhiv Drevnikh Aktov, Moscow
TsGIA	Tsentral'nyĭ Gosudarstvennyĭ Istoricheskiĭ Arkhiv, Leningrad
<u>VI'ŖA</u>	<u>Voprosy istorii religii i ateizma</u>

Zernova

A.S. Zernova, Knigi kirillovskoy pechaty
izdannye v Moskve v XVI-XVII vekakh,
Moscow, 1958

Zh'NIP

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prosveshcheniya

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